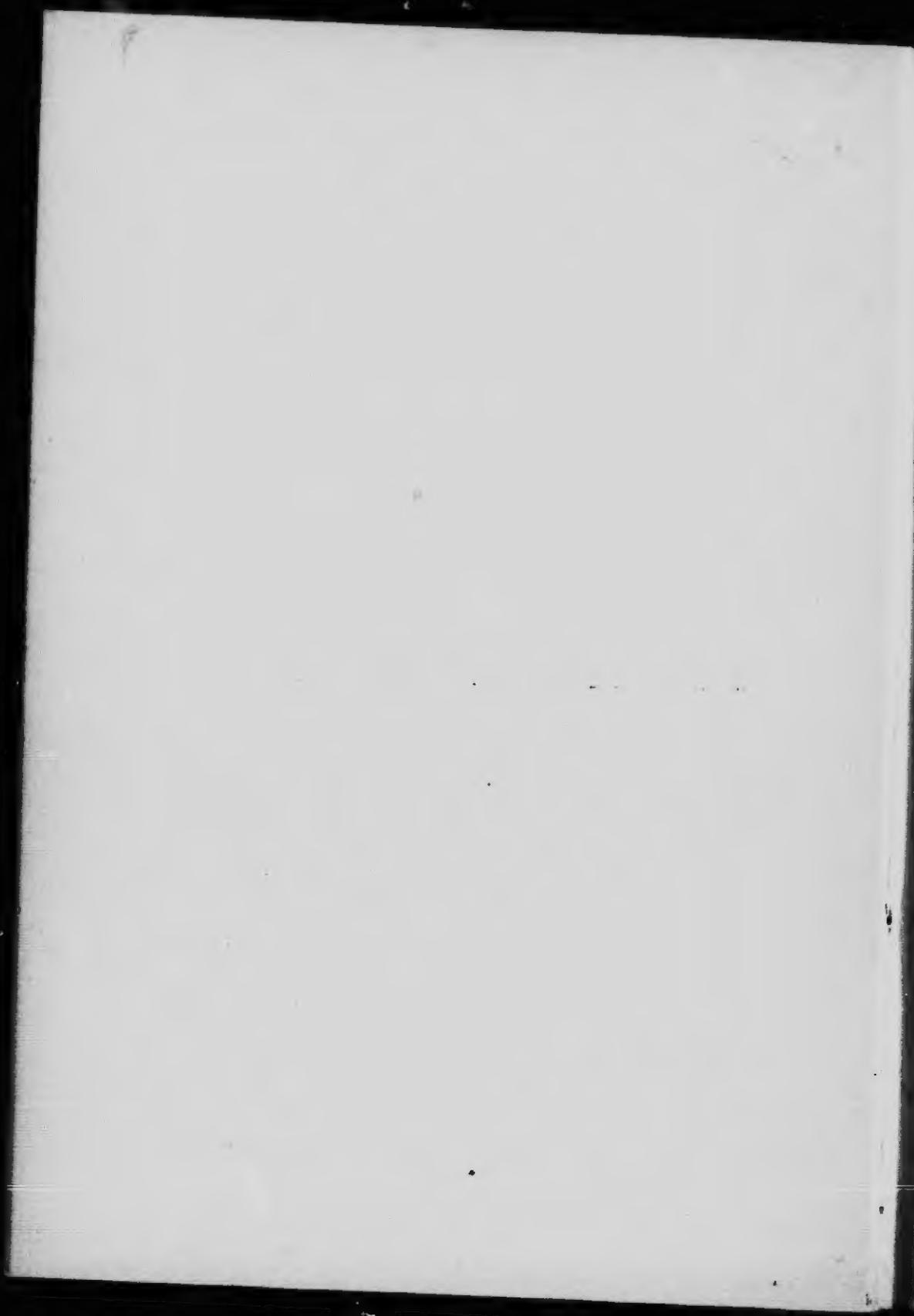


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# **PRESBYTERIAN WORSHIP**



# **PRESBYTERIAN WORSHIP**

**ITS SPIRIT**

**METHOD AND**

**HISTORY**

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BY

**ROBERT JOHNSTON, D.D.,**  
**London.**

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## INTRODUCTION.

THE worship of the sanctuary is a living subject of discussion and practice in the Presbyterian Churches of the world at large, and, within late years, in that of the Canadian Dominion. Many earnest minds are approaching the study of the subject from various standpoints, each worthy of attentive consideration. One regards it from the dogmatic position of scriptural precedent, or from the larger one of Christian principle; the aesthetic mind comes to it with visions of order and beauty; the practical, with his view of the Church's needs in mission fields and in mixed congregations. There is room in the discussion for the largest statement of lawful opinion, founded on conviction of absolute right, and on Christian expediency, and for the exercise of abundant charity.

Dr. Johnston gives no uncertain sound on the subject. To his mind the duty of the Church,

first and last, is to preserve spirituality of worship, and to discountenance everything that may tend to interfere with the same. But, while this spirit pervades his work, his method is historical, and thus preeminently fair and impartial in statement. The presentation of the argument in concrete or historical form invests it with an interest which could hardly be commanded by either dogmatic or practical methods, while it excludes neither.

Dr. Johnston brings to his task ripe scholarship, including extensive knowledge of Church history and ecclesiology, his proficiency in which he has recently vindicated in such a manner as to leave no room for doubt. To this he adds the teaching of pastoral experience in mission fields, prior to his ordination, and, since then, in large and influential congregations ; and, to crown the whole, heartfelt devotion to the Church of his fathers, and unswerving personal loyalty to its King and Head.

With adoring thanks to the great Teacher of us all, who rewards professors in their declining years with the affectionate regard of their whilom best students, now become wise and

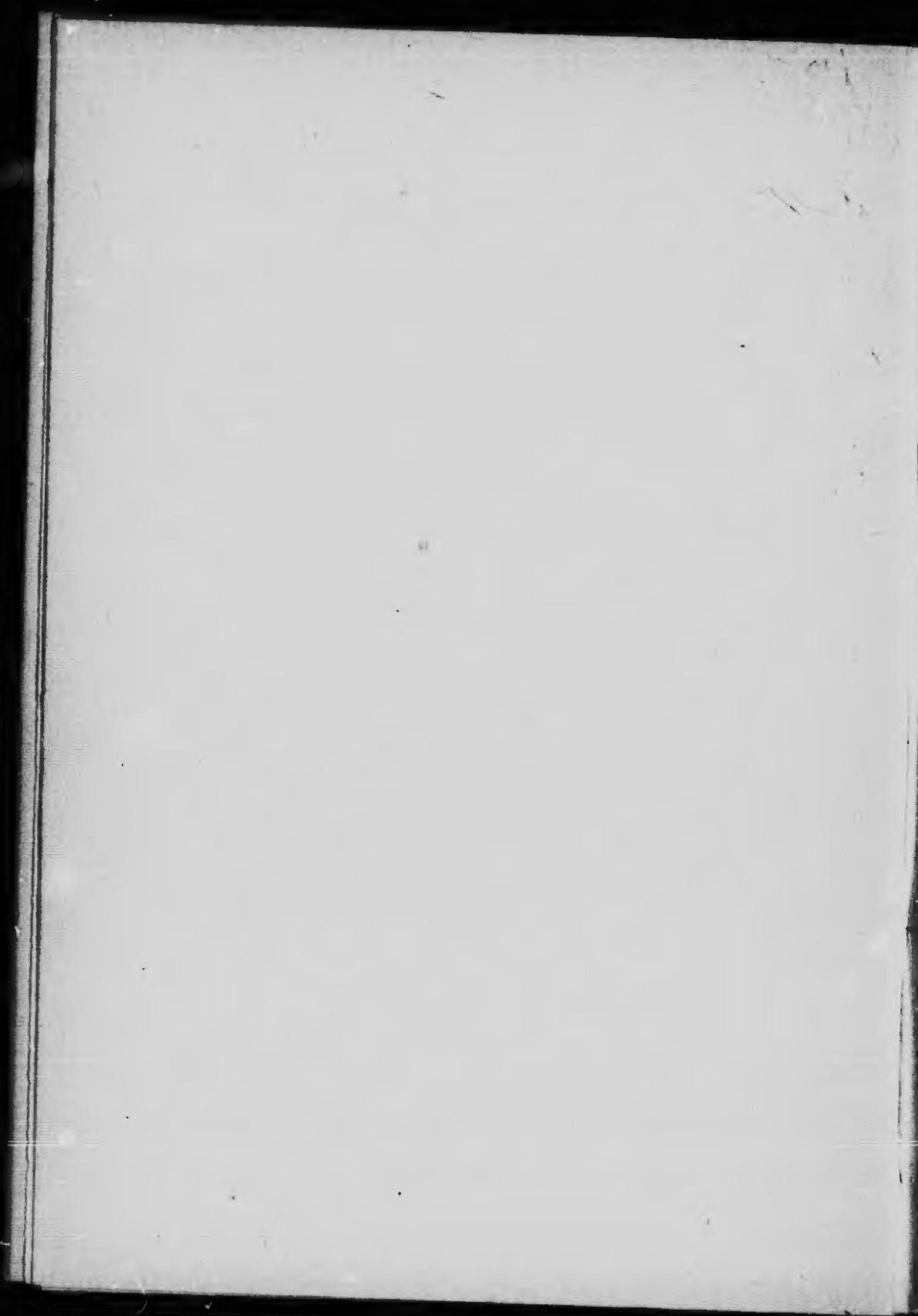
INTRODUCTION.

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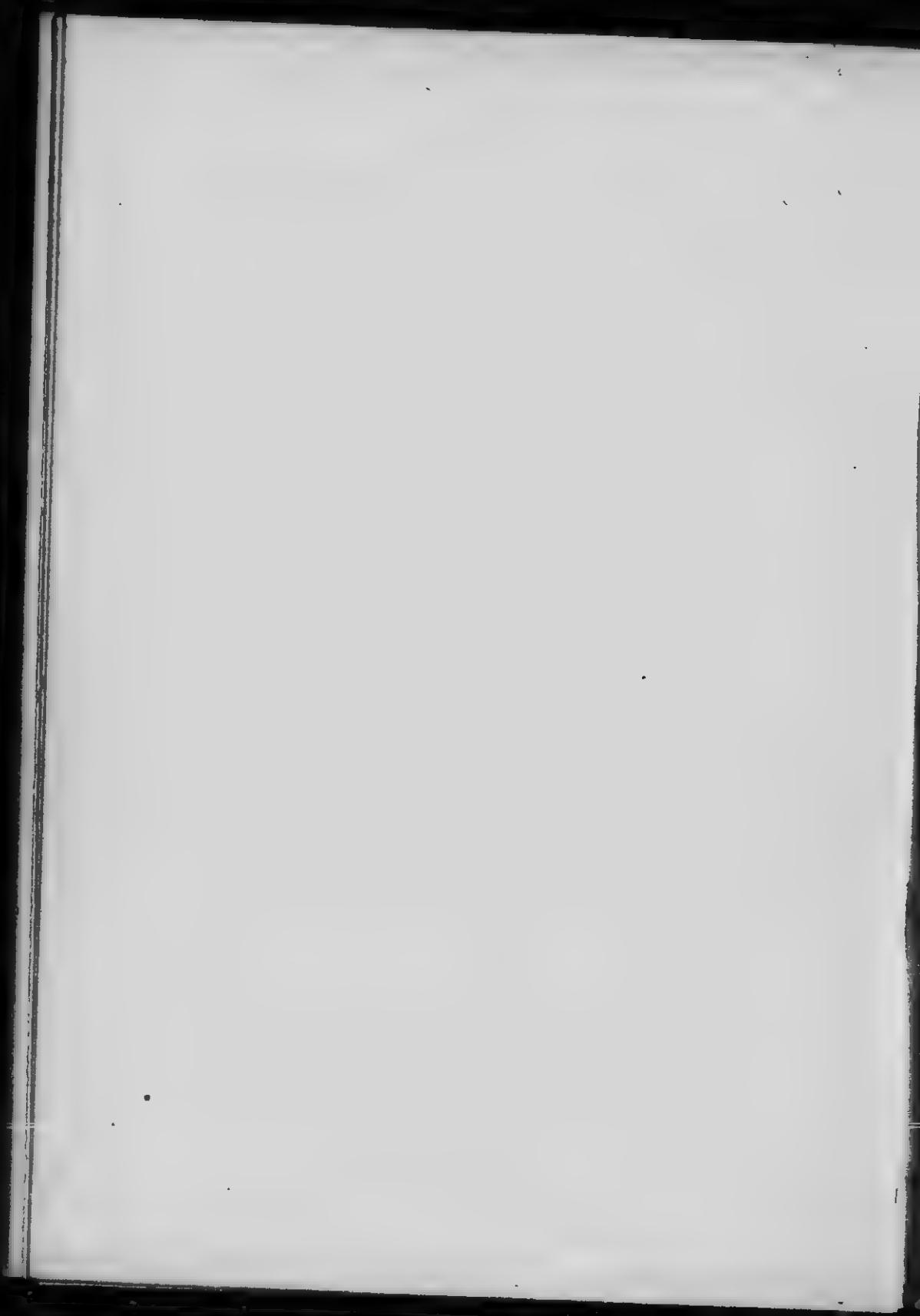
strong men in the Church's service, I cordially commend to all who may read these words, this outcome of Dr. Johnston's Christian erudition and conscientious literary labor.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Campbell".

PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE,  
MONTREAL, March, 1901.



TO ONE WHO LOVED  
THE HOUSE OF GOD ON EARTH,  
AND WORSHIPS NOW  
IN THE CITY WHEREIN IS NO TEMPLE—  
MY MOTHER.



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"Inward truth of heart alone, is what the Lord requires. Exercises superadded are to be approved, so far as they are subservient to Truth, useful incitements, or marks of profession to attest our faith to men. Nor do we reject things tending to the preservation of Order and Discipline. But when consciences are put under fetters, and bound by religious obligations, in matters in which God willed them to be free, then must we boldly protest in order that the worship of God be not vitiated by human fictions."—CALVIN.

## PREFATORY NOTE.

THE purpose in the following pages is a simple one. It is to discover the trend of thought in connection with Public Worship within the Presbyterian Church, particularly in Scotland, during the course of her history since the Reformation. The spirit of the Church in her stirring and formative periods, especially if that spirit is a constant one, is pregnant with instruction. Such a constant spirit is readily discovered by a study of the attitude of the Presbyterian Church towards the subject of Public Worship during the course of her history, and to the writer it seems very evident that that spirit indicates an increasing suspicion of liturgical forms in Worship, and a growing confidence in, and desire for, the liberty of untrammelled approach to God.

Whether this spirit be the best or not, it is not the purpose of these pages to discuss. The great principle of the liberty of the Church in

matters of detail, is fully recognized, a principle ever to be sedulously guarded, but an appeal is made to the record of history for its evidence as to the historic attitude of the Presbyterian Church, on a question which to-day is claiming the earnest attention of those who desire for that Church fidelity to her Lord and efficiency in His work.

My indebtedness in the study of this subject to Dr. McCrie's Cunningham Lectures on "Scottish Presbyterian Worship," Brown's "Life of John Knox," Sprott's "Scottish Liturgies" and Baird's "Eutaxia," as well as to various Histories of the Reformation in Scotland, and for American Church History to Moore's and Alexander's valuable digests, I gladly and with gratitude acknowledge. An abundant and increasing literature upon the subject of Public Worship is an encouraging sign of the attention which the Church is giving to a matter so vital to its best life.

R. J.

ST. ANDREW'S MANSE,  
LONDON, January, 1901

**The Law and the Liberty of  
Presbyterian Worship.**

"WHILE it is admitted that there is a form of government prescribed or instituted in the New Testament, so far as its general principles or features are concerned, there is a wide discretion allowed us by God in matters of detail, which no man or set of men, which neither civil magistrates nor ecclesiastical rulers can take from us."—HODGE.

## Chapter I.

### The Law and the Liberty of Presbyterian Worship.

"The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him."—  
*WESTMINSTER CATECHISM.*

THE Church of Christ, as a divine communion, exists in the world for a definite and appointed purpose. This purpose may be declared to be twofold, and may be described by the terms "Witness" and "Worship."

It is the evident design of God that the visible Church should bear witness to His existence and character, to His revelation and providence, and to His grace towards mankind, manifested in His Son, Jesus Christ. To Israel God said, "Ye are my witnesses," and to His disciples forming the nucleus of the New Testament Church, the risen Saviour said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me."

Side by side with this evident end of the Church's existence is the other one of Worship. Not only from the individual heart does God require ascriptions of praise and expressions of confidence, but from the organized congregation of His people, He desires to hear the voice of adoration, contrition, and supplication. The cultivation of such worship, and the offering of it in a manner acceptable to God, is a work worthy of the Church's most earnest care.

It is to be expected, therefore, that in the Word of God there shall be found the principles of a cultus which, possessing Divine authority, shall carry with it the assurance of its sufficiency for the ends aimed at, and of its suitability to the requirements of the Church in every age. That the word of God contains such principles clearly indicated, the Presbyterian Church has always maintained, teaching uniformly and emphatically that Holy Scripture contains all that is necessary for the guidance of the Church, as well in matters of Polity and Worship, as in those of Doctrine. Divine worship, therefore, neither in its constant elements nor in its methods, is a matter of mere human device, nor is the Church at liberty to devise or

to adopt aught that is not explicitly stated or implicitly contained in the Word of God for her guidance.

The essential parts of worship we are at no loss to discover, clearly indicated as they are in the history of the Apostolic Church. Praise and Prayer, with the reading and exposition of Scripture, together with the celebration of the Sacraments, are repeatedly referred to as those exercises in which the early Christians engaged. With such worship, though in more elaborate form, the Church had always been familiar, for as Christianity itself was in so many respects the fruit and outcome of Judaism, the expansion, into principles of world-wide and perpetual application, of truths that had hitherto been national and local, so its worship and organization were, in large measure, the adaptation of familiar forms to those simpler and more comprehensive ones of the New Testament Church. Throughout the successive periods of Israel's history, marked by patriarch, psalmist, and prophet, Divine worship had grown from simple sacrifice at a family altar to an elaborate temple-ritual, in which praise and prayer and the reading of the Law occupied a prominent place; to

this were added in later times the exposition of the Law and the reading of the Prophets. This service, elaborate with magnificent and imposing forms, continued in connection with the Temple worship down to the time of our Saviour, while in the Synagogue a simpler service, combining all the essential parts of the former with the exception of sacrifice, was developed during the period subsequent to the Babylonian captivity, when, as is generally conceded, the Synagogue with its service had its origin. Apart then from the ritual connected with sacrifice, which was wholly typical, the temple service and the simpler worship of the Synagogue were identical in their different parts, although differing widely in form.

Now, just as Christianity was itself not a substitute for the Jewish religion but a development and enlargement of it, so Christian worship was an outgrowth, with larger meaning and broader application, of the worship of God which for centuries had been conducted among the Jews. It continued to comprise the essential elements of prayer and praise, together with the reading and exposition of the Divine message, a message which was enlarged in Apostolic times by the record concerning the Christ who had

come, and by the inspired writings of the Apostles of our Lord to the Church which they had been commissioned to plant and foster, while associated with these was the administration of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. It has always been maintained by the Presbyterian Church, that of these different elements of worship, none should be neglected, inasmuch as all of them have Divine sanction, and that to these nothing should be added, inasmuch as any addition made, could possess human sanction only, and would be a transgression of the principle that Scripture and Scripture alone contains authority for the government and practice of the Church of Jesus Christ.

It follows that in the arrangement and adjustment of each of these various parts of worship, in their due relation to each other, and in the determination of the methods that shall prevail in their performance, the Church must be governed by an appreciation of the purpose for which they have been established, and of the ends which they are expected to serve. The object of public worship must ever be kept in view, and no forms, however attractive, are to be admitted by which that object may be hidden

or obscured : on the other hand, order and seemliness demand a due attention, and it is an error, only less mischievous than the former, to have regard to the spirit of worship alone, and thus to neglect whatever suitable forms and methods may best secure the orderly and appropriate performance of its every part.

The most commonly recognized purpose of public worship is the cultivation of the spiritual life of the worshipper, and this is attained by the employment of means intended to bring the soul into an attitude of response to its Lord. It follows then that matters of form, attitude, and order in worship, should be so arranged and regulated that they may serve as aids to the securing of this end, and that nothing should be permitted which may in any way interfere with the development of this spirit of response on the part of those so engaged. And when it is remembered how small a matter may interfere with the worship of a congregation, and how easily disturbed and distracted the hearts of men are by untoward circumstances or conditions, it will be seen that not only the forms of worship demand attention, but that the order of its different parts, the attitude of the worshippers,

and all matters of detail are worthy of careful thought and of earnest consideration. But Christian worship has an altruistic aim also, and is intended to serve as a witness before the world to those fundamental truths professed by the Christian Church. With this end in view, it is evident that its forms should be such as shall most clearly and effectively set forth before the eyes of beholders, those truths and principles which the Church holds as essential to Christian faith and practice. To obscure such a public declaration of Christian belief, by hiding these truths beneath an elaborate adornment that disguises or completely conceals them, is to be faithless to the commission of Jesus Christ to be a witness unto Him before the world ; to neglect such witness-bearing, or by carelessness or inattention to detail, to render it in a manner so ineffective as to disparage the truth in the eyes of beholders, is to be none the less unfaithful to that great commission.

With the twofold purpose of worship clearly kept in view as the foundation for any discussion of this subject it is also to be remembered that the Church of Christ is left free by her Divine King and Head, so to order matters of

detail, under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, and in harmony with the principles laid down in Scripture, as may in accordance with varying ages and circumstances seem best for the attainment of the ends desired. While Christian worship in its essential parts is prescribed by Scripture, the Church is free to amplify or develop these general outlines, provided only that all be in harmony with the spirit of Revelation. It is very evident that new conditions of a progressive civilization, the spirit of the times, or the particular circumstances of a community, may make desirable a modification of a particular method of worship long practised; it is for the Church, relying ever on the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, to determine how such modification may, without violation to the spirit of Scripture, be made. For this reason it can never be binding upon the Church to accept as final, the particular methods of worship used and found suitable by men of another age or another land; while such may be accepted as valuable for suggestions contained, and as indicating the spirit that controlled good and great men of another time, yet the Church can only accept them (in loyalty to the Spirit Who

abides in her, and Who is hers in every age) in so far as they prove themselves suitable to present times and conditions. The present possession by the Church, of the Holy Spirit as a guide into all truth, according to the promise of Christ to His disciples, is a doctrine that no branch of the Church would readily surrender, and her right, under that guidance, to seek the good of the body of Christ on lines which, while consistent with the principles of Scripture, commend themselves to her as more suitable to present conditions than former methods, this right is one which she can part with only at the risk of endangering her usefulness to her own age.

To Presbyterians, therefore, thankful as they are for an historic past that has in it so much to arouse gratitude to God and loyalty to the Church they love, the citing of the practice of their forefathers in Reformation times, or even that of the early fathers of the Church, can never be a final argument for the acceptance of any particular method in worship. Believing in a Church in which the Spirit of God as truly governs and guides to-day as He did in Reformation or post-Apostolic times, and in a Chris-

tian liberty of which neither the practice nor legislation of holy men of the past can deprive them, they rightly refuse to surrender their liberty or to retire from their responsibility.

In the best and truest sense the Presbyterian Church is Apostolic, and her spiritual succession from the Apostles he cherishes with an unfaltering confidence. While rejecting the ritual theory of the Church, she has never been careless of the true succession of faith and doctrine and practice from the time of the Apostles to the present day, a succession to which she lays a not unworthy claim; and, claiming loyalty to Apostolic doctrine, polity and practice, she has ever been jealous in asserting her Divine right, as an Apostolic Church, to the controlling presence and guiding wisdom of the Holy Spirit of God. Under the guidance of that Spirit she has ever claimed, and still claims, the right of administering the government and directing the worship which, in their essential principles, are set forth in Scripture, neither superciliously regarding herself in any age as independent of those who have gone before, and so disregarding the legislation and practice of the fathers, nor, on the other hand, slavishly accepting such

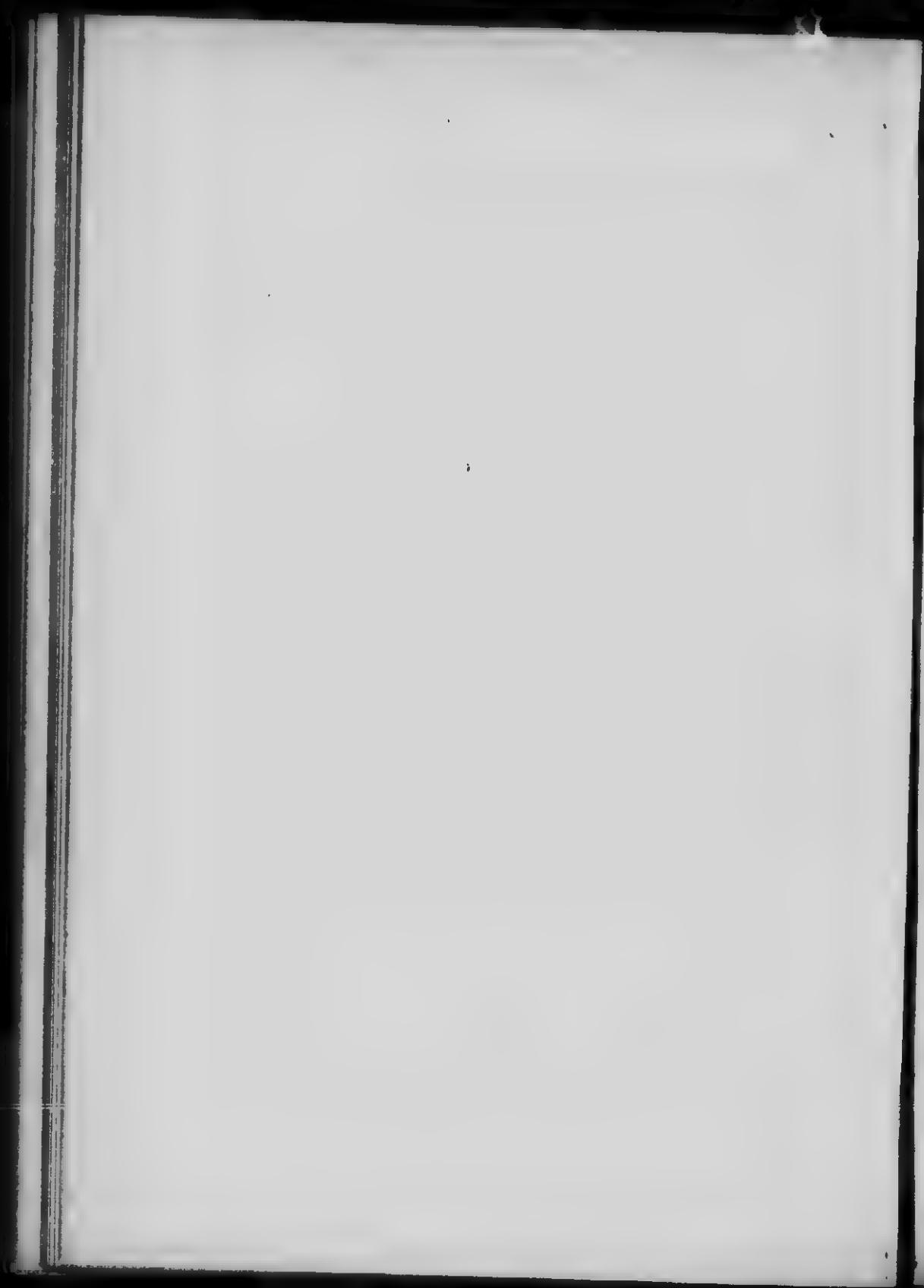
legislation and practice as binding upon the Church for all time, and as excluding for ever any progress or change. That spirit, at once of independence as regards man, and of dependence as regards God, has characterized Presbyterianism in its most vigorous and progressive periods; by that spirit must it still be characterized if, in succeeding ages, the work allotted to it is to be faithfully and well performed.

If then the Church of one age is so independent of those who in other times have served her, it may be asked of what interest is her past history to us of to-day, and of what benefit to us is a knowledge of the legislation and practice of the Church in other periods of her progress? Of much value in every way is such knowledge. Those periods in particular, in which the Church has made notable progress, and in which her life has evidently been characterized by much of the Holy Spirit's presence and power, may well be studied, as times when those in authority were, indeed, led to wise measures, and guided to those methods of administration and practice, which by their success approved themselves as enjoying the Divine favor; the lamp of experience is one which wise men will never treat

with indifference. In studying the Reformation period, therefore, a period marked by special activity and progress within the Presbyterian Church, we do so, not so much to discover forms which we may adopt and imitate, as to discover the spirit which moved the leaders in the Church of that day, and the principles which governed them in formulating those regulations, and in adopting those practices, which proved suitable and successful in their own age. To emulate the spirit of brave and wise men of the past is the part of wisdom, to imitate their methods may be the extreme of folly.

Another result, and one equally desirable, will be attained by a study of Presbyterian practice from Reformation times onward. It will transpire, as we follow the history of public worship, by what paths we have arrived at our present position, and we shall discover whether that position is the result of diligent and careful search after those methods most in accord with Scripture principles, and so best suited to the different periods through which in her progress the Church has passed, or whether it is due to a temporary neglect of such principles, and a disregard of the changing necessities of different

ages. We shall discover, in a word, whether we have advanced, in dependence upon the Spirit of God and in recognition of our responsibilities, or whether we have retrograded through self-trust and indifference.



**The Age of Knox: the Formative  
Period of Presbyterian Worship.**

"AMONG the great personages of the past it would be difficult to name one who in the same degree has vitalized and dominated the collective energies of his countrymen."—BROWN'S LIFE OF KNOX.

## Chapter II.

### The Age of Knox: the Formative Period of Presbyterian Worship.

IT was in the year 1560 that the Reformed religion was officially recognized by the Estates of the Realm of Scotland, as the faith of the nation. This recognition consisted in the adoption by Parliament of the first Scottish Confession, a formula drawn up by Knox and his brethren at Parliament's request, and formally approved by that body as "wholesome and sound doctrine grounded upon the infallible truth of God's Word." This year may, therefore, be regarded as the year of the birth of the Church of Scotland, although previous to it the Reformed faith had been preached, and its worship practised, in many parts of the land where nobles and barons, who had themselves adopted it, held individual or united sway.

A glance at the condition of affairs in Scotland in the years immediately prior to this event

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will be instructive. In 1557, as a result of Knox's rebuke of the Scottish nobles for their hesitancy in forwarding the Reformed faith, the "Confederation of the Lords of the Congregation" was formed, and its members subscribed to the first of the five Covenants that played so important a part in the religious history of Scotland. In this Covenant, those subscribing bound themselves to "maintain and further the blessed Word of God and His congregation and to renounce the congregation of Satan with all the superstitions, abominations and idolatry thereof." To the general declaration were appended two particular resolutions, in which was expressed a determination to further the preaching of the Word, in the meantime, in private houses, and to insist on the use of King Edward's Prayer Book in parishes under the control of subscribers to the Covenant. By these same Protestant lords and commoners the first official order, authorizing for their own parishes a form of Reformed worship in Scotland, was issued in these terms:—

"It is ordained that the Common Prayers be read weekly on Sunday, and other festival days, publicly in the

parish Kirks with the lessons of the Old and New Testaments conform to the order of the Book of Common Prayer."

It is generally conceded, and the judgment is supported by the references to it in Scottish history, that this Book of Common Prayer thus authorized was the second Book of King Edward the Sixth.

From the year 1557 until the arrival of Knox in Scotland in 1559 this was the Book commonly used in parishes where the Reformed religion prevailed. It disappeared, however, as so much else of a foreign character disappeared, in the course of the national Reformation, giving place to the Book prepared by Knox and then commonly known as "The Book of Our Common Order" but now frequently referred to as "Knox's Liturgy." This was originally the work of Knox and four associate reformers living in exile in Frankfort-on-the-Main, and the history of its origin is interesting. It had been required of the English refugees living at Frankfort, as a condition of their being allowed to use for worship the French church of that town, that they should adopt the Order of Worship of the French Reformed Church. To this require-

ment the majority agreed, but, some objecting, it was finally determined that five of their number, of whom Knox was one, should draw up a new order of service. This work, undertaken in 1554, was duly accomplished, but when completed it failed to find acceptance at the hands of those who had proposed it. The draft of the new book was therefore laid aside until 1556, and was then published for the use of the church at Geneva, of which Knox in the meantime had become the minister.

There is in connection with this Book, and the debates and disturbances attending its preparation, one instructive fact that should not be forgotten. The English Prayer Book provided for responses by the people and included the Litany, to both of which the French Reformed Church objected, in accordance with the well-known opinions of their great leader Calvin, who held, as did also his disciple Knox, that in praise alone should the congregation audibly join in public worship. Among the English refugees were some who desired the privilege of responding in public worship according to the English fashion, and it was the persistence in this matter of Cox, afterwards Bishop of Ely,

and of some of his co-patriots, that led to Knox's removal to Geneva, and to the publication there of the Book of Geneva as an order for public worship in the English congregation to which he ministered. It is important that this should be remembered, for in speaking of the Book of Common Order as "Knox's Liturgy," and thus giving to it a name by which it was never known in Knox's day, an impression has prevailed, and is still prevalent, that the book provided a form of worship liturgical in character, with a responsive service, while the fact is that Knox made no provision for even so much as the saying of "Amen" by the people, their part in prayer being the silent following in their hearts of the petitions uttered by the reader or the preacher for the day.

The first official recognition of this book in Scotland was in 1562, when an order of the General Assembly required that it should be uniformly used in the administration of the Sacraments, solemnization of marriage and burial of the dead. At this time it was still in its Genevan form, and was called "The Form of Prayers and Ministration of the Sacraments, etc., used in the English congregation at Geneva; and

approved by the famous and Godly-learned man, M. John Calvin." Two years later, in 1564, a Scottish edition appeared, in which were additional prayers with the complete copy of the Psalter, and in this year the General Assembly ordained that :

"Every Minister, Exhorter and Reader shall have one of the Psalm Books lately printed in Edinborough, and use the order contained therein in Prayers, Marriage and Ministration of the Sacra-ments."

This book was called "The Form of Prayers and Ministration of the Sacraments, etc., used in the English Church at Geneva approved and received by the Church of Scotland, whereunto besides that was in the former books are also added sundry other Prayers with the whole Psalms of David in English Metre." As the Psalms occupied by far the greater part of the book it came to be commonly known as "The Psalm Book," and as such, with frequent additions, among which were several hymns and doxologies, it continued to be the recognized Book of Common Order of the Scottish Church down to the time of the Westminster Assembly. It cannot be claimed, however, that this book

ever secured a firm or lasting hold upon the affections of the Scottish people in general. Its authority was ecclesiastical only, inasmuch as the Estates of the Realm never gave to it the official sanction which they had repeatedly granted to King Edward's Prayer Book. One reason for this evident want of popularity may have been that, except in its Psalter department and in some of its minor parts, it was a book for the clergy only and not for the people. Even the Psalms in those days passed through new editions so rapidly, and were subjected to such serious changes, that they never obtained the place in the affections of the people that later versions have secured, and by 1645 The Book of Common Order appears to have fallen into such comparative neglect that no strong resistance was made to its abolition in favor of the Directory of Worship.

That it was held in esteem by the clergy, although not so revered as to be looked upon as incapable of improvement, appears from the fact that in 1601 a proposal was made to revise it, together with the confession of faith, which had been prepared by Knox. This work was committed to Alexander Henderson, the renowned

minister of Leuchars and the valiant leader of the Church of Scotland in her resistance against the tyranny of Charles the First and his minister, Laud. The revision, however, was never accomplished, Henderson confessing, according to the historian, Baillie, that he could not take upon him "either to determine some points controverted, or to set down other forms of prayer than we have in our Psalm Book, penned by our great and divine reformer.

A book which held for so long a time its place of authority in the Scottish Church, and which embodied during so important a period the law of the Church concerning worship, deserves particular study at the hands of those who are interested in the history of this important subject, but inasmuch as the form of worship alone is under discussion, it will be necessary to refer only to those parts of it which bear on this phase of the Church's practice. Before doing so, however, it will be instructive to notice what is too frequently overlooked, that the adoption of Knox's Book of Common Order by the Scottish Church indicates even in that age a desire for forms of worship less liturgical than those which were employed by other parts of

the Reformed Church. It is to be remembered that those parishes in which the Reformed religion prevailed had been accustomed to the use of the English Book of Common Prayer with responsive services for the people, and with prayers from which the minister was not supposed to deviate. This Book was set aside, and in its place was adopted an Order of worship in no part of which provision was made for responses, and in all of whose prayers the minister was not only allowed freedom, but was encouraged to exercise the same. Such action on the part of men accustomed to make changes only after careful deliberation, clearly indicates an intelligent choice of a non-liturgical service as opposed to one of the opposite character.

More than this, the Scottish Book of Common Order is marked by an even greater freedom from prescribed forms than is Calvin's original Book of Geneva from which Knox copied so largely. For while both of them agreed in avoiding a responsive service, Knox seems to have been even less than Calvin in sympathy with prescribed forms of prayer from which no deviation was to be allowed. There is nothing to indicate that Knox would have agreed with the sentiment expressed

in Calvin's letter to the Protector Somerset, in which he says : "As to what concerns a form of prayer and ecclesiastical rites, I highly approve of it, that there be a certain form from which the ministers be not allowed to vary. . . . Therefore there ought to be a stated form of prayer and administration of the Sacraments." The form of Church prayers, as originally prepared by Calvin in keeping with his sentiments above expressed, do not provide for any variation in certain parts of the service. The Scottish Book of Common Order, however, allows, in its every part, for the operation of the free Spirit of God, and for other prayers to be offered by the minister than those there suggested.

At this period of its history, therefore, we find the Church of Scotland more pronounced than any other section of the Reformed Church in its desire for freedom from prescribed forms in the worship of God. Indeed, we are probably not in error in judging that in different circumstances, with an educated ministry in the Church and those appointed as leaders of worship who had received training for that important work, Knox would have felt even such a book as that which he prepared, to be both unnecessary and undesirable.

**Knox's Book of Common Order.**

"The Book of Common Order is best  
described as a discretionary liturgy."—SPROTT.

## **Chapter III.**

### **Knox's Book of Common Order.**

THE Book of Common Order makes no reference to the reading of Scripture as a part of public worship, nor does it, after the fashion of many similar books, contain a table of Scriptures to be read during the year. This omission however, is amended by an ordinance found in the First Book of Discipline prepared by Knox in 1561, and adopted by the General Assembly of that year, by which it is declared to be:

"A thing most expedient and necessary that every Kirk have a Bible in English, and that the people be commanded to convene and hear the plain reading and interpretation of the Scripture as the Kirk shall appoint."

It was further enjoined by the same authority and at the same time that :

"Each Book of the Bible should be begun and read through in order to the end, and that there should be no skipping and divagation from place to place of Scripture, be it in reading or be it in preaching."

It is evident, therefore, that it was the purpose of Knox that the whole of Holy Scripture should be publicly read for edification, and that it should be read as God's message to men and not as an exercise subordinate to the preaching, or intended merely to throw light upon the subject of the discourse.

In connection with the reading of Scripture and of the Prayers, mention is made, in this same Book of Discipline, of an Order of Church officers who filled an important place in the Church of that time. It was ordained that where "no ministers could be had presently" the Common Prayers and Scriptures should be read by the most suitable persons that could be selected. These suitable persons came to be known as "Readers," and they form a distinct class of ecclesiastical officers in the Reformation Church of Scotland. The need of such an Order was evident, for the Church found great difficulty in securing men of the requisite gifts and graces for the office of the ministry. The Readers therefore, formed an important and numerous order in the Church for many years, numbering at one time no less than seven hundred, while at the same time there was less

than half that number of ordained ministers. These men were not allowed to preach or to administer the sacraments, and they formed only a temporary order required by the exigencies of the times, as is evident from the fact that the General Assembly of 1581, in the hope that all parishes would soon be supplied with ordained ministers, forbade any further appointment of Readers.

In the mind of Knox, these men were the successors to the *lectors* of the early Church, and corresponded in Scotland to the *docteurs* of the Swiss Reformed Church, a Church whose organization he regarded as but little less than perfect. Although they conducted a part of the service in parishes where ministers regularly preached, yet in the original idea of the office the intention was that they should conduct public worship, in its departments of prayer and praise and reading of the Scriptures, only in parishes where a minister could not be secured. It is necessary to understand their office and their position in the Church, inasmuch as the existence of such an order has a bearing upon our appreciation of the form of public worship at this time adopted in Scotland.

In the exercise of public prayer the greatest freedom was granted the minister by the Book of Common Order. Calvin had prescribed a form of confession, the uniform use of which he required, but the general confession with which the service of the Book of Common Order opened, was governed by this rubric:

"When the congregation is assembled at the hour appointed, the Minister useth this confession, or like in effect, exhorting the people diligently to examine themselves, following in their hearts the tenor of his words."

Similar liberty was also allowed the minister in the prayer which followed the singing of the Psalms and preceded the sermon; the rubric governing this directed that:

"This done, the people sing a Psalm all together in a plain tune; which ended, the Minister prayeth for the assistance of God's Holy Spirit *as the same shall move his heart*, and so proceedeth to the sermon, using after the sermon this prayer following, or such like."

And finally, as governing the whole order of worship, it is added:

"It shall not be necessary for the Minister daily to repeat all these things before mentioned, but, beginning with

some manner of confession, to proceed to the sermon, which ended he either useth the prayer for all estates before mentioned or else prayeth as the Spirit of God shall move his heart, framing the same according to the time and matter which he hath entreated of. And if there shall be at any time any present plague, famine, pestilence, war, or such like, which be evident tokens of God's wrath, as it is our part to acknowledge our sins to be the occasion thereof, so are we appointed by the Scriptures to give ourselves to mourning, fasting and prayer as the means to turn away God's heavy displeasure. Therefore it shall be convenient that the Minister at such time do not only admonish the people thereof, but also use some Form of Prayer, according as the present necessity requireth, to the which he may appoint, by a common consent, some several day after the sermon, weekly to be observed."

The liberty allowed to the minister in this so important part of public worship is evident, and although many prayers are added as suitable for particular times and occasions, and some, which are described as of common use under certain circumstances and by particular churches, yet none of them are prescribed as the *only* prayers proper for any particular season or occasion.

Even in the administration of the Lord's Supper, the directions which accompany the prayer which precedes the distribution of the bread and wine allows a similar latitude to the Minister.

"Then he taketh bread and giveth thanks, either in these words following or like in effect."

The student of the life of the great Scottish Reformer does not need to be told that the framer of the Book of Common Order was not himself bound by any particular form of prayer in public worship. On the occasion of his memorable sermon after the death of the Regent Moray, his prayer at its close was the passionate outburst of a burdened soul, impossible to one restricted by prescribed forms, while his prayer, which is still preserved, on the occasion of a national thanksgiving, is an illustration of the perhaps not excellent way in which, in this exercise, he was accustomed to combine devotion and practical politics ; a part of it ran thus :

"And seeing that nothing is more odious in Thy presence, O Lord, than is ingratitude and violation of an oath and covenant made in Thy Name : and seeing that Thou hast made our

confederates of England the instruments by whom we are now set at liberty, to whom we in Thy Name have promised mutual faith again; let us never fall to that unkindness, O Lord, that either we declare ourselves unthankful unto them, or profaners of Thy Holy Name."

It is not surprising that one who allowed himself such liberty in public prayer should lay no binding forms upon his brethren in the ministry.

It remains only to be said, with regard to the restrictions of the Book of Common Order, that so far from providing any fixed form of prayer for uniform use, even the Lord's Prayer was not imposed in any part of public worship. It is added, together with the Creed, to the form of prayer called "A Prayer for the Whole Estate of Christ's Church," but this prayer is governed by the general rubric already quoted, which permits such variation as the minister, moved by the Spirit of God, shall deem desirable. There is nothing to show that it was expected that the Lord's Prayer should be used as an invariable part of public worship.

With these facts before us, whatever our judgment may be of the wisdom of Knox and of the Church of his day in the matter of a regulated

service, we cannot close our eyes to the evident conclusion that the Reformer was wholly opposed to the bondage of form in prayer. In this part of public worship he claimed for himself, and exercised under the guidance of the Spirit of God, the greatest freedom; and consistent with this position he never sought to impose as a part of regular public worship, the repetition by the minister of even that form of prayer which of all others has for its use Divine authority. To whatever in worship the Book of Common Order may lend its countenance, it assuredly gives no support to the imposition upon worshippers of prescribed forms of prayer.

Side by side with that part of public worship already considered there has always been associated the exercise of Praise.

Although the Scottish Church conformed most closely to the Churches of France and Switzerland, yet it was impossible that it should not, to some degree, be influenced by the spirit of the German Reformation. This influence was especially marked in that which was a special characteristic of the German Church, a love for sacred song and a delight in the same on the part of the people.

The Book of Common Order contained, as has been mentioned, in its early editions, the complete Psalter, and to this were added, subsequently, a few Scripture Hymns, together with the Doxology *Gloria Patri* in different metres, so that it could be sung at the end of every Psalm. This Doxology appears in Hart's edition of the Book of Common Order of 1611, in six different metres, under the general head of "Conclusions," and was evidently used regularly at the close of the Psalms sung in public worship. It was not until the beginning of the seventeenth century that there began to arise criticisms of the custom of singing the Doxology, and it would, therefore, appear that during the formative period of the Scottish Church, which we are considering, it was regularly used, and occasioned no objection and aroused no opposition. The Hymns which were printed with the Psalter were few in number, and were chiefly free paraphrases of sections of Scripture. They are "The Ten Commandments," "The Lord's Prayer," "Veni Creator," "The Song of Simeon called *Nunc Dimitis*," "The Twelve Articles of the Christian Faith," and "The Song of Blessed Marie called *Magnificat*." The purpose of the Hymns appears

to have been the memorizing of Scripture and important doctrinal truths, and there is no evidence that they were employed in public worship, although a place was not denied them in the Book of Common Order; in the Order for Public Worship mention is made of Psalms only, and in all the accounts, which have come down to us in correspondence or history, of the public services of that time, the people are invariably spoken of as joining in a Psalm, while even in the public processions, which were common on occasions of national rejoicing or thanksgiving, Psalms only are mentioned as being sung by the people.

The singing was usually led by the Reader, but there is occasional mention in the records of the time of the "Uptaker" of the Psalms, who evidently performed the duties of a Precentor.

The Sacraments.—In the Confession of Faith, which forms the first part of the Book of Common Order, it is clearly stated that there are two Sacraments only in the Christian Church, and that these are Baptism and The Lord's Supper. No subject in connection with the practice of the Church created more discussion in Reformation times than the methods which

were to be followed in the administration of the Sacraments. The spirit of the Scottish reformers is indicated in the following sentence, which governed this matter :

" Neither must we in the administration of these Sacraments follow man's fancy, but as Christ himself hath ordained so must they be ministered, and by such as by ordinary vocation are thereunto called."

In accordance with this general regulation the Book of Common Order prescribes in detail "The Manner of the Administration of the Lord's Supper."

The words of the opening rubric are as follows :

" The day when the Lord's Supper is ministered, which is commonly used once a month, or so oft as the Congregation shall think expedient, the Minister useth to say as follows : "

Here follow the words of institution of the Supper from St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, after which is added an exhortation in which flagrant sinners are warned not to draw near to the holy table, and timid saints are encouraged in wise and helpful words to approach with repentance and faith. This is the address which in later times came to be known as " Fencing

the Table." There are no words to indicate that any variation from the prescribed address was encouraged.

The address being finished

"The Minister comes down from the Pulpit and sitteth at the Table, every man and woman in likewise taking their place as occasion best serveth: Then he taketh Bread and giveth thanks either in these words following or like in effect."

This prayer is wholly one of praise and thanksgiving, there being an evident purpose in the omission of any invocation of the Holy Spirit and of words that might be regarded as a consecration of the bread and wine, and in the strict adherence to the example of our Lord, Who, "when He had given thanks, took bread."

The manner of communing is then described:

"This done, the Minister breaketh the bread and delivereth it to the people, to distribute and divide the same among themselves, according to our Saviour Christ's commandment, and likewise giveth the cup: During the which time some place of the Scriptures is read which doth lively set forth the death of Christ, to the intent that our eyes and senses may not only be

occupied in these outward signs of bread and wine, which are called the visible word, but that our hearts and minds also may be fully fixed in the contemplation of the Lord's death, which is by this Holy Sacrament represented. And after this action is done he giveth thanks, saying :"

The prayer of thanksgiving which follows is the only one in connection with this service for which no alternative was allowed the minister. An appropriate Psalm of thanksgiving followed the prayer, the Blessing was invoked and the congregation dispersed.

The Communion, as is evident from the rubric quoted above, was received while the congregation was seated, and this practice the Presbyterians adhered to and defended as against the Episcopal practice of kneeling at this service, regarding the latter attitude as liable to be interpreted as a rendering to the Sacrament of homage and adoration which should be reserved for God alone.

The service, it is evident, was marked by simplicity and by an almost total absence of prescribed form. In a note "to the reader," the author of the Book of Common Order explains that the object throughout is to set forth simply

and effectively those signs which Christ hath ordained "to our spiritual use and comfort."

How often this Sacrament was to be observed was left to the judgment of individual congregations, but frequent celebration was recommended. Calvin thought it proper that the Lord's Supper should be celebrated monthly, but finding the people opposed to such frequent celebration he considered it unwise to insist upon his own views. With his opinions on this matter, those of Knox were quite in harmony.

The Sacrament of Baptism was likewise characterized in its administration by similar simplicity, and yet it is evident that, in this more than in any other part of public worship, the minister was restricted to the forms provided both in prayer and in address.

The rubrics which govern the two prayers of the service and the address to the parents, make no mention of alternate or similar forms being permitted. In this the Book of Common Order differs from the Book of Geneva, which allowed the minister liberty in these parts of the service. There would seem, therefore, to be an evident intention on the part of the Scottish reformers in thus departing from their custom in

other parts of worship. It may be that inasmuch as Baptism is the Sacrament of admission into the Church, it was deemed advisable that for the instruction of those seeking membership therein, either for themselves or for their children, the form of sound doctrine set forth at such a time should not be varied even in the manner of statement.

The Sacrament was administered in the Church "on the day appointed to Common Prayer and preaching," instruction being given that the child should there be accompanied by the father and godfather; Knox himself had, as godfather to one of his sons, Whittingham, who had been his chief assistant in compiling the Book of Common Order, and who had also been his helper and fellow-worker at Geneva. The opinion of the Swiss reformers, as well as that of their Scotch followers, was in favor of the presence of sponsors in addition to the parents at the baptism of children. The parent having professed his desire to have his child baptized in the Christian faith, was addressed by the minister, and called upon to profess his own faith and his purpose to instruct his child in the same. Having repeated the Creed, the minister pro-

ceeded to expound the same as setting forth the sum of Christian doctrine, a prescribed prayer followed, the child was baptized, and the prayer of thanksgiving, also prescribed, closed the service.

The Book of Common Order required that marriages should be celebrated in the Church and on the Lord's Day :

"The parties assemble at the beginning of the sermon and the Minister at time convenient saith as followeth :"

In the forms of exhortation and admonition to the contracting parties no liberty to vary the address is allowed the minister, but in the one prayer which formed a part of the service, viz., the blessing at the close of the ceremony it is ordered :

"The Minister commendeth them to God in this or such like sort."

The service ended with the singing of an appropriate Psalm.

In the service for burial of the dead it was ordered by the First Book of Discipline that neither singing, prayer, nor preaching should be engaged in, and this "on account of prevailing superstition." In this matter, however, permission was granted to congregations to use

their discretion ; Knox, we know, preached a sermon after the burial of the Regent Moray, and the directions in the Book of Common Order clearly leave much to be determined by the circumstances of the case :

" The corpse is reverently brought to the grave accompanied with the Congregation without any further ceremonies : which being buried, the Minister, if he be present and required, goeth to the Church, if it be not far off, and maketh some comfortable exhortation to the people touching death and resurrection; then blesseth the people and so dismisseth them."

This is but one of many instances that show that the early reformers accorded to the Church, in matters not absolutely essential to the preservation of sound doctrine and Scriptural practice, the greatest liberty. With regard to the administration of the Sacraments and the public worship of God, they laid down well-defined regulations and outlines to which conformity was required ; in matters that might be looked upon as simply edifying and profitable, liberty was allowed to ministers and congregations to determine according to their discretion, as Knox himself declared with respect to exercises of worship at burials :

"We are not so precise but that we are content that particular Kirks use them in that behalf, with the consent of the ministry of the same as they will answer to God and Assemby of the Universal Kirk gathered within the realm."

We have thus presented in brief outline the contents of the Book of Common Order, commonly used in Scotland from 1562 to 1645, in so far as its regulations refer to public worship and the administration of the Sacraments. The book is itself so simple and clear in its statements that it is not difficult to discover the spirit of its compilers, and their understanding of what was required for the seemly and Scriptural observance of the different parts of Divine worship. The results of our survey may be summed up in a few words.

The Scottish Church gave a prominent place to prayer, to the reading of Holy Scripture, and to praise, in the public worship of God on the Lord's Day. Not in any sense do these exercises seem to have been regarded as subordinate in importance to the preaching of the Word; the congregations assembled for Divine worship, of which preaching was one important part. But even where there was no preaching, the people

nevertheless came together for Divine worship, in which they were led, in the absence of any minister, by persons duly appointed for that purpose.

The service in public worship was not in any of its departments a responsive one. The only audible part shared by the people was in the praise; they did not respond in prayer even to the extent of uttering an audible "Amen," nor did they join audibly in any general confession, in a declaration of faith as contained in the Apostles' Creed or in any other formulary, nor did they even repeat with the minister the Lord's Prayer when that model of prayer given by Christ to His disciples was used in public worship.

Liberty under the guidance of the Holy Spirit marked the minister's use of the forms provided, and the privilege of extempore prayer was sacredly guarded, the example of Knox, as well as his precept, encouraging his brethren in the ministry to cultivate free and unrestricted prayer to God. In this matter the Church declared her belief in the Holy Ghost and in His presence with her, believing that those who were divinely called to the work of the ministry

were by the Spirit of God duly equipped for the performance of the important duties of that office. Although forms of prayer were provided, these appear to have been intended mainly for the use of the Readers, who were not duly ordained to the ministerial office, ~~and for~~ <sup>the</sup> guidance of ministers, but IN NO PART OF PUBLIC WORSHIP APART FROM THE SACRAMENTS WAS THE MINISTER CONFINED TO THE USE OF PRESCRIBED FORMS. Even the Readers enjoyed a degree of liberty in this matter, a liberty which they exercised, as is evident from an Order of Assembly passed in the reign of James forbidding Readers to offer extemporary prayers, but requiring them to use the forms prescribed.

Lastly, in the administration of the Sacra-  
ments honor was put upon them by the care  
that was observed in their public, reverent and  
frequent observance. Simplicity marked all the  
service connected with these holy ordinances,  
while, at the same time, whatever might appear  
to unduly exalt them to an unscriptural position  
in the thoughts of men, was carefully avoided, as  
well in the prayers and exhortations used as in  
the manner of administration. The Sacraments  
were regarded as helps to the spiritual life of

God's elect, as "medicine for the spiritually sick," and were never represented as holy mysteries into which only certain of God's children should penetrate.

If these conclusions are just, it is very evident that those who to-day advocate the introduction into Presbyterian worship of responses and prescribed forms can find no support for such a practice, however they might limit it, in Knox's Book of Common Order, or in the practice of our Scottish ancestors in this so virile and vigorous period of the Church's history. Just as little support, too, can those find who would impose upon the ministry of the Church the use of set forms from which no deviation is to be allowed either in the conduct of public worship or in the administration of the Sacraments. The most that can be argued from this ancient regulation of worship, which is much more accurately described as a Directory rather than as a Liturgy, is the desirability of a uniform order of service for the whole Church, of a due proportion of attention to each part of worship, and of the conformity by all ministers to a uniform method in the administration of the Sacraments. The Book of Common Order clearly indicates the

conviction of the Scottish reformers that all things in connection with the worship of God should be done "in seemly form and according to order," and it quite as clearly indicates their purpose to acknowledge and rely upon the operation of the free Spirit of God, in the exercise of that worship and in the performance of the public ordinances in the sanctuary.

**A Diet of Public Worship in the  
Time of Knox.**

"WHAT I have been to my country, albeit  
this unthankful age will not know, yet the ages  
to come will be compelled to bear witness to the  
truth."—JOHN KNOX.

## Chapter IV.

### A Diet of Public Worship in the Time of Knox.

A DIET OF WORSHIP on a Sabbath day in Scotland in the days of Knox, or in the period immediately succeeding his death, had for the people of that time a profound interest. It was a period of storm and upheaval, and the Church, with its worship and teaching, was the centre around which, in large measure, the struggles of the age gathered; and although for us these struggles are simple history, and the subjects of debate are, many of them, forever laid aside, still it is of interest to learn how a service in connection with the public worship of the day proceeded in this formative period of Presbyterian practice, when order and method were less matters of indifference than they are now.

Happily we are not left without abundant material for forming an accurate picture of a Sabbath-day service at that time, for in addition

to the explicit directions contained in the Book of Common Order, there have come down to us descriptions of public worship by participants therein.

As early as seven o'clock a bell was rung to warn the people of the approach of the hour of worship, and this was followed an hour later by another bell, which summoned the congregation to the place of prayer. It was a congregation of all classes, for in Scotland the Reformed doctrine made its way among the great and the lowly alike. Writing in 1641, a refutation of the charge made in England against the Scotch that they "had no certain rule or direction for their public worship, but that every man, following his extemporary fancy, did preach or pray what seemed good in his own eyes," Alexander Henderson thus describes in his reply the congregation in a Scotch Church: "When so many of all sorts, men and women, masters and servants, young and old, as shall meet together, are assembled, the public worship beginneth." In the early days of Presbyterianism the rich and the poor met together, realizing that the Lord was the Maker of them both.

The congregation assembled in a Church

building that was plain in its interior, the plainness being emphasized, and at times rendered unsightly, by reason of the removal of the statues and pictures which in pre-Reformation times had decorated the walls and pillars. The building was, however, as required by the Book of Discipline, rendered comfortable and suitable for purposes of worship. It was ordered, "lest that the Word of God and ministration of the Sacraments by unseemliness of the place come into contempt," there should be made "such preparation within as appertaineth as well to the majesty of the Word of God as unto the ease and commodity of the people." Such wise words indicate on the part of our Scottish ancestors an appreciation in their day of what is all too often even in these happier and more enlightened times, forgotten—the importance of having a Church building in keeping with the greatness of the cause to which it has been dedicated, and at the same time suitable and convenient for the purposes of public worship. The narrowness which would forbid beauty and artistic decoration and the pride which would sacrifice comfort and convenience for the sake of appearance, were both avoided. At one end of the building stood

a pulpit, beside it, or within it, a basin or font for use in the administration of the Sacrament of Baptism, and in the part where formerly the altar had stood, tables were placed for use in the observance of the Lord's Supper; at the end of the Church opposite to the pulpit was placed a stool of repentance, an article frequently in use in an age when Church discipline was vigorously administered. Pews were as yet unknown; some churches had permanent desks or benches, to be occupied by men holding public positions, or by prominent members of influential guilds, the rest of the people stood throughout the service, or sat upon stools which they brought with them to the Church.

The members of the congregation on entering the Church were expected to engage reverently in silent prayer, and at the hour appointed, the Reader from his desk called upon all present to join in the Public Worship of God; he then proceeded to read the Prayer prescribed in the Book of Common Order, or, if he so desired, to offer one similar thereto in intent; in either case the prayer was a general confession, and was followed by a Psalm or Psalms announced by the Reader and sung by the whole congregation

and ending with the *Gloria Patri*. Next came the reading of the Scriptures from the Old and New Testaments, the reading being continuous through whatever books had been selected. This ended that part of public worship which was conducted by the Reader, and occupied in all about one hour.

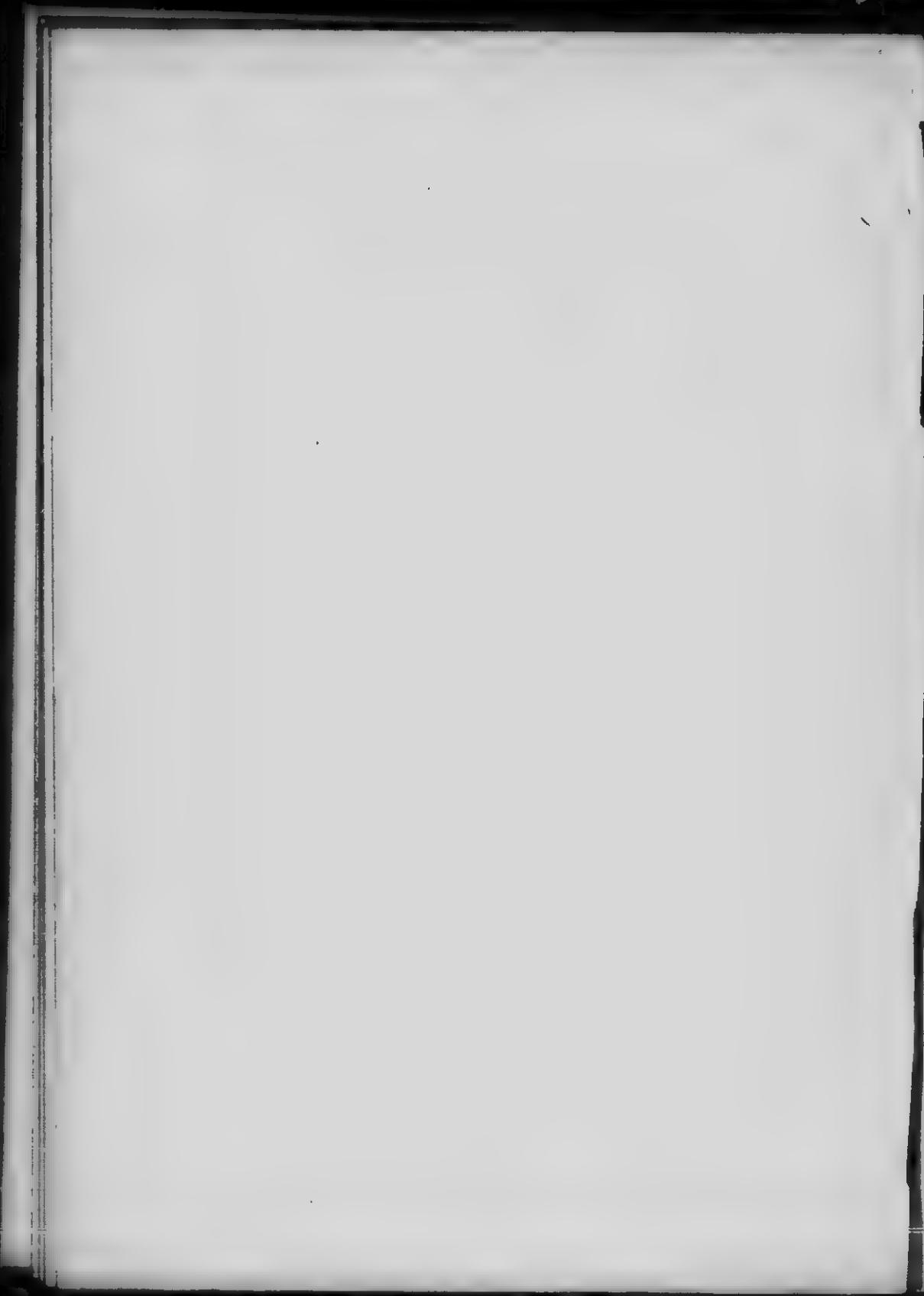
On the second ringing of the bell, the minister entered the pulpit, knelt in silent devotion, and then led the people in prayer "as the Spirit moved his heart;" this finished, he proceeded to the sermon, to which the people listened either standing or sitting, as opportunity afforded, with their heads covered, and occasionally, if moved thereto, giving vent to their feelings by expressions of applause or disapproval. After the sermon the minister led the congregation in prayer for blessing upon the Word preached and for the general estate of Christ's Church: if the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed were employed in the service (but this was optional with the minister) they were repeated by the minister alone at the close of this prayer, and embodied in it; a Psalm was sung by the congregation and the Benediction was pronounced, or rather, the Blessing was invoked, for the

petitions were framed as supplications : "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with us all : So be it."

Such was the course of an ordinary diet of worship. If a marriage was to be celebrated the parties presented themselves in Church before the sermon ; the ceremony having been performed, the parties remained, according to regulation, until the close of the public worship. If the Sacrament of Baptism was to be administered the infant was presented for the ordinance at the close of the sermon by the father, who was attended by one or more sponsors. When the Lord's Supper was observed (which in some congregations was monthly) the tables were spread in that part of the Church which had formerly been the chancel, and as many communicants as could conveniently do so sat down together with the minister. These, when the tables had been served, gave place to others.

The services throughout were marked by simplicity, reverence and freedom from strict and unbending forms ; liberty characterized their every part, and room was left for the exercise of the guiding Spirit of God, in a measure not

enjoyed by Churches tied to the use of a prescribed worship; at the same time there was a recognized order and a reverent devotion in all parts of the worship which many non-liturgical Churches of this day may well covet. It was a service simple yet impressive, voluntary yet orderly, regulated and yet untrammeled.



**The Period of Controversy, 1614-1645.**

"THEY were splintered and torn, but no power could bend or melt them. They dwelt, as pious men are apt to dwell, in suffering and sorrow on the all-disposing power of Providence. Their burden grew lighter as they considered that God had so determined that they should bear it."—

**Friend.**

## Chapter V.

### The Period of Controversy, 1614-1645.

THE years from 1603, the date of James the Sixth's ascent to the united thrones of England and Scotland, until 1645 the year of the Westminster Assembly, cover one of the most exciting and interesting periods in Scottish history. Especially is this period of interest to the student of Scottish Church history, because of the influences both direct and indirect which the struggles of that time had upon the development of the character and practice of the Presbyterian Church.

The Book of Common Order had received the authority of the General Assembly sitting in Edinburgh in 1564, and for nearly fifty years from that date it was the unchallenged directory for worship and usage in the Scottish Church. Its use, though not universal, was general, and it was uniformly referred to, as well in civil as in ecclesiastical courts, as comprising for the Church the law respecting public worship.

The first mention of any desire to modify or amend this book occurs in 1601, in the records of the General Assembly, when a motion was made respecting an improved version of the Bible, a revision of the Psalter and an amendment of "sundry prayers in the Psalm-Book which should be altered in respect they are not convenient for the time." The Assembly, however, declined to amend the prayers already in the Book, or to delete any of them, but ordained that:

"If any brother would have any prayers added, which are meet for the time....the same first to be tried and allowed by the Assembly."

The motion thus proposed, and the action of the General Assembly regarding it, is of interest in that it seems plainly to indicate that whatever desire there was for change, this desire was not the result of a movement in favor of a fuller liturgical service, nor on the other hand, of one which had for its object the entire removal of the form of worship at that time in use. To this form, commonly employed, no objection was offered, but owing to changing times and circumstances, it was regarded as desirable that the matter contained in the suggested forms of

prayer should be so modified as to make them more applicable to the conditions of the age.

James the Sixth of Scotland ascended the throne of the united kingdoms in 1603, and many of his Presbyterian subjects cherished the hope that his influence would be exerted to conform the practice and worship of the Church of England to that of other Reformed Churches. In this hope they were destined to severe disappointment, as it very soon became evident that the aim of the royal theologian was to reduce to the forms and methods of Episcopacy, those of all the Churches within his realm. In considering the subject of Presbyterian worship it will not be necessary to enter fully into the history of the civil struggle between the Church of Scotland and the Stuart Kings except in those phases of it which affected the worship of the Church; as these, however, are so closely interwoven with questions of government it will be impossible always to avoid reference to the latter or to keep the two absolutely distinct.

In 1606 it was decided by the Scottish Parliament that the King was "absolute, Prince, Judge and Governor over all persons, estates, and causes, both spiritual and temporal, within the

realm." Four years later the General Assembly, composed of commissioners named by the King, met at Glasgow and issued a decree to the effect that the right of calling General Assemblies of the Church belonged to the Crown. This, among other acts of this Assembly, was ratified by the Parliament of 1612, and James, having thus secured the position in the Church which he coveted, proceeded in his endeavors to mould it, as well in its worship as in its government and doctrine, to his own views.

The Church of Scotland was not allowed to remain long in ignorance of the King's purpose. Early in 1614 a royal order was sent to the northern kingdom requiring all ministers to celebrate Holy Communion on Easter Day, the 24th of April, and this was followed in 1616 by a proposal from the King to the General Assembly that "a liturgy and form of divine service should be prepared" for the use of the Scottish Church. The Assembly (formed as indicated above) with ready acquiescence heartily thanked His Majesty for his royal care of the Church and ordained :

"That a uniform order of Liturgy or divine service be set down to be read

in all Kirks on the ordinary days of prayer and every Sabbath day before the sermon, to the end the common people may be acquainted therewith, and by custom may learn to serve God rightly. And to this intent the Assembly has appointed . . . to revise the Book of Common Prayer contained in the Psalm Book, and to set down a common form of ordinary service to be used in all times hereafter."

The work thus authorized of revising the Book of Common Order was at once undertaken by those appointed thereto, but although a draft was made and much labor was expended upon it during a term of several years, the book in its revised form was never introduced into the Scottish Church. By the time it had received its final revision at the hands of the King and his Scotch advisors in London, such events had transpired, and such a spirit of opposition had been aroused in Scotland by other measures, that it was deemed wise to withhold it, and the death of James occurring in 1625, while it was still unpublished, the book in its revised form was retained by Spottiswoode, Bishop of St. Andrew's, and appears to have been forgotten for years, even by its most active promotor. From correspondence in the time of Charles

First, however, it appears that James had not relinquished his aim of imposing the new book upon the Scottish Church, and it is probable that his death alone prevented the attempt being made to carry out his cherished purpose.

Much of the voluminous correspondence, which at this time passed between James and the leaders of the Scottish Church, is still extant and it serves to indicate some of the anticipated changes in the forms of worship.

In the regular worship appointed for the Lord's Day there was to be introduced a liturgy which was to be used before the sermon; the Ten Commandments were to be read, and after each of them the people were to be instructed to respond, or, as the rubric directed:

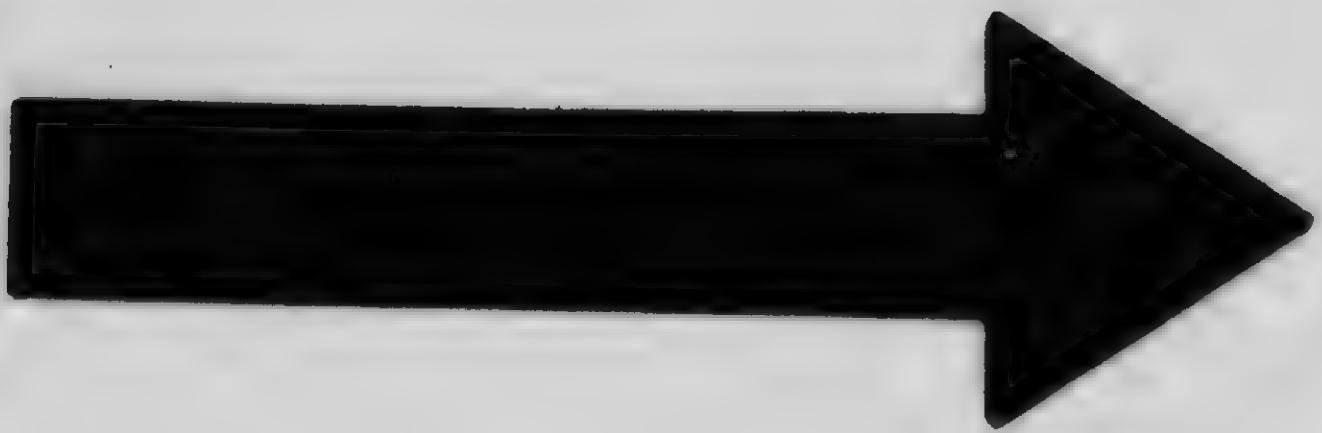
"After every Commandment they ask mercy of God for their transgression of the same in this manner,—Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this law."

There was also an evident purpose to leave less to the discretion of the minister, and to restrict him more closely to the use of provided forms in prayer, as well as to regulate more particularly the reading of the Scriptures. A table of Scripture lessons was to be prepared

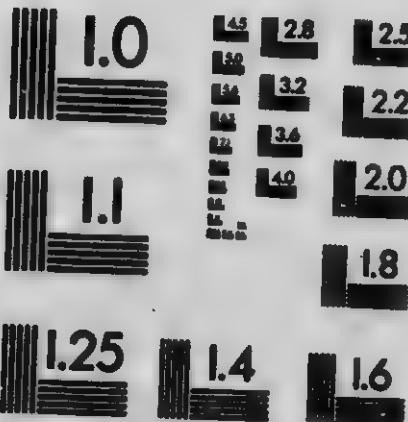
showing the passages proper to be read on each day; prayers were also provided for worship upon saints' days and festivals, in the use of which there was to be no option, and the privilege of extempore prayer in any part of public worship was to be taken from the minister, in large measure if not entirely. That this intention was cherished seems evident from a discussion in which Spottiswoode engaged with one Hog, minister at Dysart. Hog had defended an action complained of, by saying that his prayer on the occasion referred to had been in conformity with Knox's Book of Common Order; in reply Spottiswoode declared that "In a short time that Book of Discipline would be discharged and ministers tied to set forms."

The Book was regarded by all as a compromise between the Book of Common Order and the English Prayer Book, and appears to have excited no enthusiasm, even among its promoters; it was too subversive of Scottish custom to please those who were loyal to the old usage, and it was not sufficiently liturgical to suit James and his like-minded counsellors.

It has been stated that the transpiring of certain events had delayed the publication of this



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Liturgy ; these events were connected with the historic " Articles of Perth." These " Articles " were orders, first of the General Assembly of 1618, sitting at Perth and acting under royal instruction, and afterwards of the Parliament which confirmed them in 1621, enjoining

Kneeling at the Communion ;

Private Communion in cases of sickness ;

Private Baptism " upon a great and reasonable cause ; "

Episcopal Confirmation ;

The observance of the festivals of Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Day, Ascension Day and Whitsunday.

The Five Articles were passed in Assembly in spite of vigorous opposition on the part of a minority that, nevertheless, represented the most intense feeling of a very large section of the Scottish people. The first of these Five Articles, that were subversive of so much for which the reformers had struggled and had at last secured, re-established a practice that could only be regarded by the Church as Romish in its tendency, and wholly unscriptural. It excited the most violent opposition, and secured for itself,

even after its approval by Parliament, determined resistance on the part of the people.

Previous to this, in 1617, James had by his childish flaunting of the service of the Church of England in the face of the Scottish subjects, on the occasion of his visit to Edinburgh, estranged the sympathies of many who had previously been not unkindly disposed toward his projects, and aroused among the people in general, a deeper and more widespread opposition to his scheme of reform than had hitherto made itself manifest. Some months before his visit he had given orders for the re-fitting of the Royal Chapel at Holyrood, and for the introduction of an organ, the preparation of stalls for choristers, and the setting up within the Chapel of statues of the Apostles and Evangelists. The organ and choristers the Scotch could abide, but the proposal of "images" aroused such an outburst of opposition on the part of the people that James, being advised of it, made a happy excuse of the statues not being yet ready, and withdrew his order for the forwarding of them to Scotland. The services in Holyrood Chapel, however, during the visit of His Majesty to Edinburgh, were all after the Episcopal form, "with singing

of choristers, surplices, and playing on organs," and when a clergyman of the Church of England officiated at the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the majority of those present received it kneeling. All this, as may be imagined, had its effect upon James's Scottish subjects, but that effect was the opposite of what he had hoped for. Instead of inspiring a love for an elaborate liturgy, or developing a sympathy between the two kingdoms in matters of worship, the result was to antagonize the spirit of the Scots, as well against the proposed changes as against the King, who, with childish pleasure in what he deemed proper, sought to enforce his will upon the conscience of the people from whom he had sprung, and among whom he had been educated. The loyalty of the Scots to the Stuarts is proverbial, but though ready to die for their king, to acknowledge him as lord of the conscience they could not be persuaded. A spirit of opposition stronger than that which had before existed was developed against any liturgy in Church worship, and the seeds were sown which were afterwards to bear fruit in the harvest of the Revolution of 1688. This opposition, it may be argued, was not the outcome of a calm considera-

tion of the questions involved, but was an indirect result of the national anger at the attempt of the King to coerce the consciences of his subjects. In any event, so strong was the opposition to any change in the religious worship of the land, that James ceased his active endeavors to carry out his will, and in a message to his Scottish subjects in 1624 assured them of his desire "by gentle and fair means rather to reclaim them from their unsettled and evil-grounded opinions. . . by severity and rigor of justice to inflict the punishment which their misbehavior and contempt merits."

We now come to a period marked by a still more vigorous assault upon the liberties of the Church of Scotland, and by a correspondingly vigorous opposition thereto on the part of the Scottish people. William Laud, who afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury, began to exert his influence upon the religious life of both England and Scotland during the closing years of James's reign, but it was in the reign of Charles the First, who succeeded his father in 1625, that he came before the world in his sudden and so unfortunate greatness. History has left but little doubt in the mind of the careful student

that Laud's deliberate purpose and persistent influence, both in England and in Scotland, were towards a revival of Romanism within the Church of which he was a prelate, or at least towards the creation of a high Anglicanism which would differ but little from the Romish system. Adroitly, and frequently concealing his real purpose, he labored to this end, and it is not too much to say that the vigorous and, at last, successful opposition to his plans in Scotland, saved the English Church from radical changes which it is clear he was prepared to introduce in the southern Kingdom when his desires for Scotland had been effected. England owes to Scotland the preservation of her Protestantism on two occasions: first, in the days of Knox, when the work of the sturdy Reformer prevented what must have taken place had a Catholic Scotland been prepared to join with Spain in the overthrow of Protestant England, and again when Scottish opposition effectively nipped in the bud Laud's plans for a Romish movement in both Kingdoms.

The history of the movement under Laud it is only possible briefly to summarize. In 1629 Charles revived the subject, to which his father

had devoted so much attention, of an improved service in the Church of Scotland, and wrote to the Scottish Bishops ordering them to press forward the matter of an improved liturgy with all earnestness. As a result, the draft of the Book of Common Prayer prepared in the reign of James was again brought to light and forwarded to Charles, and this would probably have been accepted and authorized for use but for Laud's influence. It however was too bald and simple to suit the ritualistic Archbishop, who persuaded the King that it would be entirely preferable to introduce into Scotland the English Prayer Book without change. Correspondence upon the matter was continued until 1633, when Charles, accompanied by Laud, visited Scotland for the purpose of being crowned, and also "to finish the important business of the Liturgy."

During his stay in Scotland Charles followed the example of his father in parading before the people upon every possible occasion the ritual of the Church of England, conduct on his part which served only to stir up further and more deeply-seated opposition. Soon after his return to England he dispatched instructions to the Scottish Bishops requiring them to decide upon a

form of liturgy and to proceed with its preparation. His message was in these terms:

"Considering that there is nothing more defective in that Church than the want of a Book of Common Prayer and uniform service to be kept in all the Churches thereof . . . we are hereby pleased to authorize you . . . to descend upon a form of Church service to be used therein."

Such a form was accordingly prepared, forwarded to London for the King's approval, and, after revision by Laud, who was commanded by His Majesty to give to the Bishops of Scotland his best assistance in this work, it was duly published in 1637, and ordered to be read in all Churches of Scotland on the 23rd of July of that year. The book appeared, stamped with the royal approval, elaborately illuminated and illustrated, and bearing this title, "The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and other parts of Divine Service, for the use of the Church of Scotland." A royal order accompanied it, in which civil authorities were enjoined to

"Command and charge all our subjects, both ecclesiastical and civil, to conform themselves to the public form

of worship, which is the only form of worship which we (having taken counsel of our clergy) think fit to be used in God's public worship in this our kingdom."

The introduction of this Service Book, as it was called, into public worship in St. Giles, Edinburgh, on the day appointed, was the signal for an outburst of popular indignation that was as fire to the heather in the land. On that occasion the Archbishop of St. Andrew's was present with the Bishop of Edinburgh, but when the Dean rose to read the new service, even the presence of such dignitaries was not sufficient to restrain the pent-up feelings of the congregation. Such a clamor arose as made it impossible for the Dean to proceed, books and other missiles were freely thrown, and a stool, hurled by the traditional Jenny Geddes, narrowly missed the Dean's head, whereupon that dignitary fled precipitately, followed by the more forcible than elegant ejaculation of the wrathful woman, "Out thou false thief; dost thou say mass at my lug?" The riot in Edinburgh was the signal for similar manifestations of popular feeling throughout the land, the national spirit was aroused, and the stately fabric which Charles and Laud, supported

by a prelatic party in Scotland, had been laboriously rearing for years, was overthrown in a day.

This feeling of opposition on the part of the people to the introduction of a liturgy into the Church of Scotland, found due and official expression in the following year. The General Assembly meeting at Glasgow repudiated Laud's Liturgy and appealed repeatedly to the Book of Common Order as containing the Law of the Church respecting worship. In his eloquent closing address the Moderator, Alexander Henderson, said: "and now we are quit of the Service Book, which was a book of service and slavery indeed, the Book of Canons which tied us in spiritual bondage, the Book of Ordination which was a yoke put upon the necks of faithful ministers, and the High Commission which was a guard to keep us all under that slavery." The people also in formal manner expressed their mind on the matter and in the Solemn League and Covenant, signed in Grayfriars Churchyard, asserted their purpose to defend, even unto death, the true religion, and to "labor by all means lawful to recover the purity and liberty of the Gospel as it was established and professed

before the late innovations." Charles at first determined upon extreme measures, and preparations were made to force "the stubborn Kirk of Scotland to bow," but wiser measures prevailed, and the desires of the Church of Scotland were for the time granted.

The Book of Common Order, thus reaffirmed as the law of the Church respecting worship, continued in use during the years following the Glasg uw Assembly of 1638, years which for Scotland were comparatively peaceful, by reason of the troubles fast thickening around the English throne.

This interesting chapter of Scottish history which we have thus briefly reviewed, is of value to us in the present discussion only in so far as, from the facts presented, we are able to understand the spirit that characterized the Church of Scotland at this period, and the principles that guided them in their attitude toward the subject of public worship. What this spirit and those principles were it is not difficult to discover. The facts themselves are plain; not only did the Church in its regularly constituted courts oppose the introduction of new forms and the elaboration of the Church service, but the people

resisted by every means in their power, and at last went the length of resisting by force of arms, the attempt to impose upon them the new Service Book.

It is asserted that the chief, if not the only cause of this resistance was, first, an element of patriotism which in Scotland opposed uniformly any measure which seemed to subordinate the national customs to those of England, and secondly, the righteous and conscientious objection of Presbyterians to having imposed upon them by any external authority, a form of worship and Church government which their own ecclesiastical authorities had not approved, and which they themselves had not voluntarily accepted. The objection, in a word, is said to have been not to a liturgy as such, but to a *foreign* liturgy and to one imposed.

It cannot be denied that these were important elements in the opposition of the Scottish people to the projects of Charles. Many of them, for one or other of these reasons, opposed the King's command, who had no conscientious scruples with regard either to the form or substance of Laud's liturgy. Too much is claimed, however, when the assertion is made that there was no

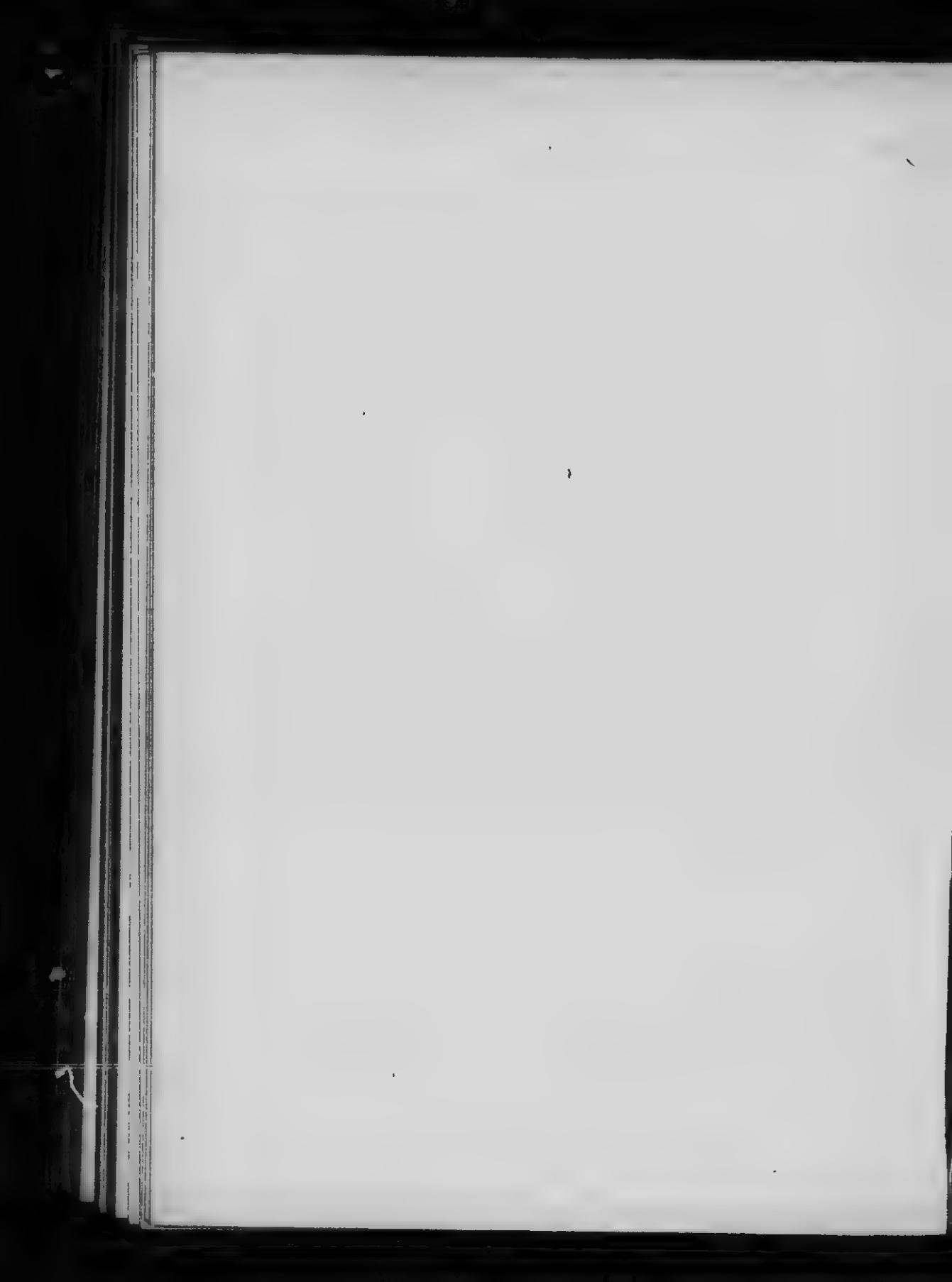
real objection among the people to the introduction of an elaborated service such as that which was proposed. The liberty of free prayer so dear to the Scottish reformers was, if not entirely denied, largely encroached upon; a responsive service, to which, in common with the great leaders of Geneva, Knox and Melville had been so uniformly opposed, was introduced; and particularly in the service for the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, forms of words were employed which seemed to teach doctrines rejected by the reformers. Here then was abundant ground for opposition to Laud's liturgy when judged on its merits, and this ground the stern theologians of that day were not likely to overlook.

Nor is it to be forgotten that in the many supplications which from time to time were presented to the King both from Church and State against the introduction of the Service Book, the anti-English plea never found a place, but uniformly, reference was made in strong terms to the unscriptural form of worship suggested for adoption by the Scottish people, together with a protest against the arrogant imposition upon them of a form of service not

desired. Persistently in these supplications the subscribers expressed their desire that there should be no change in the form of worship to which they had been accustomed, and prayed for a continuance of the liberty hitherto enjoyed. In a complaint laid before the Privy Council the Service Book and Canons are described as "containing the seeds of divers superstitions, idolatry and false doctrine," and as being "subversive of the discipline established in the Church." The Earl of Rothes in an address spoke thus : "Who pressed that form of service contrary to the laws of God and this kingdom ? Who dared in their conventicles contrive a form of God's public worship contrary to that established by the general consent of this Church and State ?" And that the *form* of worship ever held a prominent place in the discussions of the time, appears from a letter supposed to have been written by Alexander Henderson, in which he defends the Presbyterian Church against a charge of disorder and neglect of seemly procedure in worship ; he says, "The form of prayers, administration of the Sacraments, etc., which are set down before their Psalm Book, and to which the ministers

are to conform themselves, is a sufficient witness; for although they be not tied to set forms and words, yet are they not left at random, but for testifying their consent and keeping unity they have their Directory and prescribed Order."

While it is true, therefore, that the high-handed conduct of the King in forcing upon an unwilling people a form of service already distasteful because of its foreign associations, was doubtless an important element in arousing the vigorous opposition with which it was met, nevertheless, there is abundant evidence to show that apart from any such consideration, the spirit of the Church of Scotland was entirely hostile to the introduction of further forms, to the elaboration of their simple service, and to the imposition upon their ministers of prescribed prayers from which in public worship they would not be allowed to depart.



**The Westminster Assembly and the  
Directory of Worship.**

If the Assembly's Directory increased liberty, it also augmented responsibility. If it took away the support of set and prescribed forms on which the indolent might lean and even sleep, this was done to the avowed intent that those who conducted public services might the more industriously prepare for them; and thereunto the more diligently stir up the gifts of God within them.—REV. EUGENE DANIEL.

## **Chapter VI.**

### **The Westminster Assembly and the Directory of Worship.**

PRIOR to the year 1638 the Church of Scotland, in its struggle to preserve its form of worship, had to contend with the advocates of prelacy and ritualism, but now opposition to the established practice arose from another quarter.

In connection with every great reform there are apt to arise extravagant movements, the promoters of which see only one side of confessedly important truths, and so carry to undue excess some phase of reform which, in properly balanced measure, would have been righteous and desirable. So it was in the period of the Reformation. Among the several sectaries which had their origin in the Reformed Church was a company called Brownists, an extreme section of the Independents, who took their name from their founder, one Robert Browne, an Englishman and a preacher, although a rejecter of

ordination and a protester against the necessity of any official license for the work of the ministry. It was a part of their creed to object to any regulation of public worship, and even to many of the simplest ceremonies which had hitherto been retained by the Reformed Churches. In Scotland they opposed, as they had done elsewhere, all reading of prayers, and, in particular, the kneeling of the minister for private devotions on entering the pulpit, the repeating of the Lord's Prayer in any part of the public service, and the singing of the *Gloria Patri* at the end of the Psalm. The movement, let it be said, although it took an extreme form, had its spring in the deep disgust and shame felt by many pious souls at the laxity and formality which characterized religious life in England during the earlier part of the Stuart period.

The unwise policy of Charles in seeking to force upon the Scottish Church a liturgical service, had produced in the minds of many its natural result, creating extreme views in opposition to all prescribed forms of worship. The Brownists, therefore, found in Scotland a large following, and a rapidly increasing section of

the Church began gradually to depart even from the forms and suggestions of the Book of Common Order, and to adopt a still less restricted form of service. Against these irregularities the General Assemblies of 1639 and 1640 legislated, and yet in such terms as seem to indicate that already the mind of the Church at large was being prepared for change. It was ordained by the first of the Assemblies referred to that

"No novation in worship should be suddenly enacted, but that Synods, Presbyteries and Kirks should be advised with before the Assembly should authorize any change."

The desire for greater freedom in worship continued to increase, until in 1643 the General Assembly appointed a committee with instructions to prepare, and have in readiness for the next Assembly, a Directory for Divine Worship in the Church of Scotland. This was a distinct concession to that section of the Church which was opposed to even the simplest forms of an optional liturgy. The work, however, was superseded by a similar undertaking on a larger scale, in virtue of an invitation from the members of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster to the Church of Scotland to join with them in

the preparation, among other standards, of a Directory of Worship for the use of the Churches of both England and Scotland. The invitation was accepted with readiness, and "certain ministers of good word, and representative elders highly approved of by their brethren," were elected to represent the Scottish Church in this great work. These men were Baillie, Henderson, Rutherford, Gillespie and Douglas, ministers, with Johnston, of Warriston, and Lords Cassilis and Maitland as lay representatives; Argyle, Balmerinoch and Loudon were afterwards added. The work was duly prosecuted at Westminster, and, although the Scotch Commissioners with reluctance relinquished their Book of Common Order, yet for the sake of the uniformity in worship which they hoped to see established throughout England, Scotland and Ireland, they joined heartily in the work, and carried it when completed to the Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by which it was duly examined, slightly amended in the directions concerning baptism and marriage, and finally, unanimously approved in all its parts, and adopted. The terms in which the Assembly

expressed its approval of this work are unreserved:

"The General Assembly, having most seriously considered, revised and examined the Directory aforementioned, after several public readings of it, after much deliberation, both publicly and in private committees, after full liberty given to all to object against it, and earnest invitations of all who have any scruples about it, to make known the same, that they might be satisfied, doth unanimously, and without a contrary voice, agree to and approve the following Directory in all the heads thereof, together with the preface set before it; and doth require, decern and ordain that, according to the plain tenor and meaning thereof and the intent of the preface, it be carefully and uniformly observed and practised by all the ministers and others within this Kingdom whom it doth concern."

The Scottish Parliament likewise gave its approval of the Directory, which was accordingly in due time prepared for publication, and issued under the title, "A Directory for the Public Worship of God throughout the three kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland; with an Act of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland for establishing and observing

this present Directory;" and thus the Westminster Directory became the primary authority on matters of worship and administration of the Sacraments within the Church of Scotland.

Its use, however, during the years immediately following its adoption appears to have been by no means general, many still adhering to the method of the Book of Common Order, others inclining towards an even greater freedom than seemed to them to be permitted by the Directory. These latter belonged to that section of the Church afterwards known as Protesters, and whose opposition to the use of the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, as well as to prescribed forms of prayer, was most pronounced. Events soon occurred which exerted a strong influence in favor of absolute liberty in worship, and which effectively strengthened the Protesters in the position which they had assumed.

In 1651 there took place at Scone the unhappy crowning of Charles the Second by the Scots. This act placed Scotland in open opposition to Cromwell, and as a result the land was brought under his iron-handed rule during the remaining years of the Protectorate. The effect of this on the worship of the Church was to

introduce into Scotland the methods of worship approved by the Independents, to whom those parties in Scotland which were opposed to all prescribed forms or regulation of worship, now attached themselves. Worship after the Presbyterian form was not disallowed, but the preachers of Cromwell's army, with the approval of an increasing party in the Scottish Church, forced themselves into the pulpits of the land and conducted worship in a manner approved of by themselves. In these services preaching occupied the most prominent place, and to worship, as such, but scant attention was given, so that in 1653 the ministers of the city of Edinburgh, finding complaints among the people that in the services of the Sabbath day there was no reading of Scripture nor singing of Psalms, took steps to have these parts of worship resumed. While the public worship of the Church of Scotland during the period of the Commonwealth cannot be said to have had any general uniformity, it is evident that the influence of Independency upon it was toward the curtailment of form and the granting of absolute liberty to every preacher to conduct worship in whatever way seemed good to himself. It was the swing of

the pendulum to the opposite extreme from the enforced order of Laud's Liturgy. It is doubtful if this erratic period would have left any permanent effect upon the religious life and worship of Scotland, had it not been for the formation of a party in sympathy with the political principles of the Protector. This party, being forced into political opposition to the supporters of royalty, naturally found themselves, through their associations, prejudiced in favor of the religious principles and practices of those with whom they stood allied in the state; and thus it was that a strong party favoring absolute liberty in matters of worship arose in the Scottish Church.

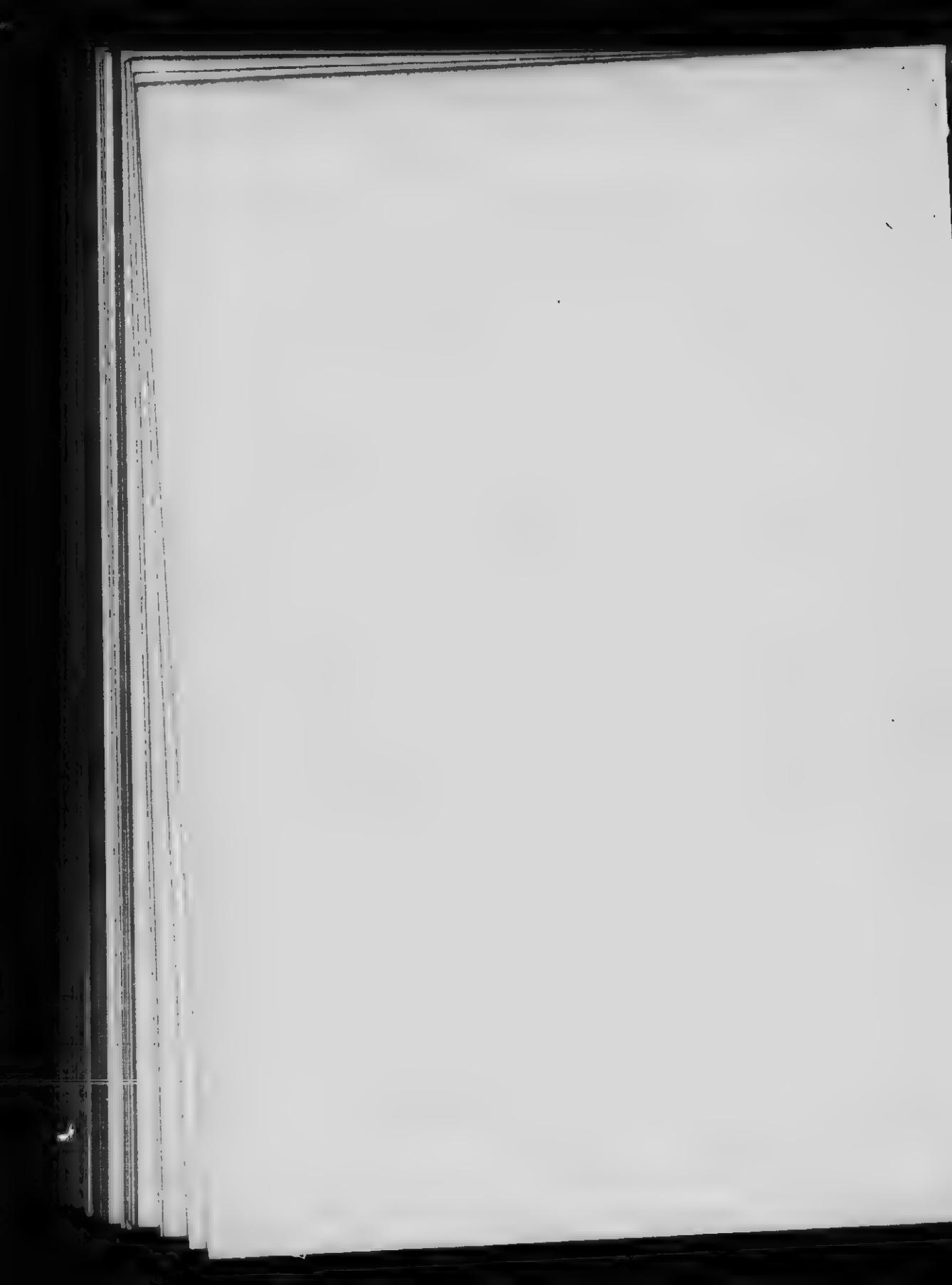
The restoration of Charles the Second in 1660 brought with it the disavowal on his part of the Covenant to which he had subscribed, and the open rejection of the Presbyterian principles to which he had been so readily loyal in the day of his distress. Episcopacy was restored as the form of Church government for Scotland, and bishops were consecrated; but it was left to time and the gradual power of imitation to secure the introduction of a ritual into the worship of the Church. Charles the Second and his minion,

Sharp, did not deem it wise to undertake a work in which Charles the First and Laud had so signally failed, the work of imposing a ritual of worship upon the Scottish Church; Episcopal government had been imposed, Episcopal worship it was hoped would follow. In both of his aims, however, though sought by such different methods, Charles was doomed to disappointment. As impotent as was the royal command, though backed by every form of deprivation of right and of cruel persecution, to secure the acceptance by Scotland of an Episcopal Church, so impotent was the service, conducted by royal hirelings and conforming curates, to inspire the people with any love for formal worship. It was, further, in comparatively few of the Churches of Scotland that any attempt was made to introduce the service of the English Prayer Book. In the now Episcopal Churches of the land, a form of worship which gave a place to the Lord's Prayer, the Gloria Patri, the Apostles' Creed, and the Decalogue, was regarded as satisfactory. Public worship, therefore, at this time may be said to have been simply a return to the method suggested, but not required, in the time of Knox; but even these historic Scottish forms,

by reason of their association with an enforced Episcopacy, became increasingly distasteful to that large body of the Scots who refused to conform to the Church by law established, and who, as a result, were driven to the moors and the hill-sides, there to worship God as conscience prompted.

The Protesters, the party to which the majority of the Covenanters belonged, had always been opposed to anything savoring of ritual in worship. But their opposition was intensified and deepened during the twenty-eight years of the "killing time," as they saw the worship of the party from which their persecutors arose, characterized chiefly by the acceptance of those forms against which they had entered their protest in former days. Even in the case of those whose consciences permitted them to conform to the established religion of the land and to wait on the ministry of the conforming clergy, there was developed, through sympathy with their persecuted countrymen, hunted on the hills and tracked to their hiding places like quarry, a suspicion of even the forms of a religion that permitted such cruelties. And thus it was that when the deliverer alike for England and Scot-

land arrived from the "hollow land," where behind their dykes the conquerors of the Spaniards had won for themselves the privilege of religious liberty, Scotland was prepared to join in the welcome given to William of Orange, and to hail with delight the prospect of a restored Presbyterianism and its inherent liberty. Most heartily, therefore, was it that the leaders in Scotland, alike in Church and State, subscribed to the request presented to William, "That Presbyterian government be restored and re-established as it was at the beginning of our Reformation from Popery, and renewed in the year 1638, continuing until 1660."



**Legislation concerning Public Wor-  
ship in the Period subsequent to  
the Revolution of 1688.**

"RELIGION shall rise from its ruins; and its  
oppressed state at present should not only excite  
us to pray, but encourage us to hope, for its  
speedy revival."—DR. WITHERSPOON.

## **Chapter VII.**

### **Legislation concerning Public Worship in the Period subsequent to the Revolution of 1688.**

IN 1689 the first Parliament under William and Mary was held, and their Majesties promised to establish by law "that form of Church government which is most agreeable to the inclinations of the people." In accordance with this promise the Confession of Faith, adopted in 1645, was in the following year declared to be for Scotland "the public and avowed confession of this Church," and an Order was issued summoning a General Assembly, the first since the forcible dissolution of the Assembly of 1653 by Cromwell's dragoons. No Act was passed at this time concerning public worship, nor was the authority of the Directory affirmed, but, whether by intention or through neglect, it was left to the Church to adjust matters pertaining to this subject, without formal instruction from Parlia-

ment. Considering, however, that the controlling party in the Church was the one that had suffered persecution, and whose well-known feelings on the subject of worship had been intensified by long and severe suffering, it is not to be wondered at if the changes and adjustments effected in church worship and discipline should in large measure bear the stamp of their extreme opinions. So far as legislation is concerned, however, moderation and fairness marked all the proceedings of the Church, for in the Assembly of 1690, which was largely composed of those whose sympathies were with the Protesters, no action whatever was taken for the regulation of public worship, the only Act having any reference thereto being one which forbade private administration of the Sacraments. But although the form of worship was not affected by legislation, it is evident from contemporary writings that the spirit of the Protesters survived, and exerted itself in fostering, in many parts of the land, a sentiment even more hostile to everything that might savor of even the simplest ritual.

The references of the Assemblies that followed the Revolution show that the Directory of Wor-

ship as adopted by the Westminster Divines, and afterwards by the Church and Parliament of Scotland, was at this time regarded as the authority in matters of worship, and it was to worship, as so regulated, that the Act of 1698 referred. This Act pertaining to "The Uniformity of Worship" ordained:

"That uniformity of worship and of the administration of all public ordinances within this Church be observed by all the said ministers and preachers as the same are at present performed and allowed therein, or shall be hereafter declared by the authority of the same, and that no minister or preacher be admitted or continued hereafter unless that he subscribe to observe, and do actually observe, the aforesaid uniformity."

The General Assembly, in the following year, in accordance with this civil legislation, prepared a form for subscription in which the subscribing minister promised to "observe uniformity of worship and of the administration of all public ordinances within this Church, as the same are at present performed and allowed." In the same year reference is made in an "Act anent Lecturing" to the "Custom introduced and established by the Directory."

It is evident, therefore, that at this period the Directory was regarded by the Church as the authority, and the only authority, in matters pertaining to worship. In spite of Acts requiring uniformity, however, there were still within the Church those who sought to introduce changes, some of these desiring the introduction of an imposed ritual, others regarding absolute congregational liberty in matters of worship as desirable. As a result of divergent views and practices there was passed by the Assembly of 1697 the Barrier Act, for the purpose of

"Preventing any sudden alteration or innovation or other prejudice to the Church in either doctrine or worship or discipline or government thereof, now happily established."

This was the formal and particular enactment of the principle laid down two generations earlier, when in 1639 the Church, disturbed by the Brownists, had ordained that "no novation in worship should be suddenly enacted."

One other Act of Assembly in this period must be quoted as showing the feeling in Scotland at this time with regard to ritual in the Church. It resulted from a determined effort on the part of some Episcopalians to introduce, wherever

possible, the English Book of Common Prayer into the services of the Church in Scotland. The Assembly accordingly enacted that:

"The purity of religion and particularly of Divine Worship . . . is a signal blessing to the Church of God— . . . and that any attempts made for the introduction of innovations in the worship of God therein have been of fatal and dangerous consequence . . . that such innovations are dangerous to this Church and manifestly contrary to our known principle (which is, that nothing is to be admitted in the worship of God but what is prescribed in the Holy Scripture) and against the good and laudable laws made since the late happy Revolution for establishing and securing the same in her doctrine, worship, discipline and government." Therefore the Church required "all the ministers of this Church . . . to represent to their people the evil thereof and seriously to exhort them to beware of them, and to deal with all such as do or practise the same in order to their recovery and reformation."

The above enactment leaves no room for doubt as to the opinion prevailing in the Church of Scotland at the beginning of the eighteenth century respecting ritual in the public worship of God. At the same time it is very evident

that a desire prevailed in the Church for a seemly and uniform order of service in public worship and an Act of the Assembly of 1705

"Seriously recommends to all ministers and others within this national Church the due observance of the Directory for public worship of God approven by the General Assembly held in the year 1645."

This deliverance may be taken as representing the spirit of all legislation of the Church respecting worship up to the middle of the present century. Whenever, in response to overtures from subordinate courts, or inspired by special requirements of the times, deliverances concerning any part of worship were prepared by the Assembly, they uniformly directed the Church to the observance of the regulation of this department of Divine service as provided for in the Westminster Directory.

It cannot be claimed, however, that due regard was accorded the Directory throughout the whole Church. The last half of the eighteenth century was a time of spiritual coldness in Scotland; not only did evangelical piety languish but there existed at the same time a corresponding want of interest in the worship of the

Church. Praise was neglected, and little effort was made to secure suitable singing of the Psalms; at times the reading of Scripture was entirely omitted, prayers were brief and meagre, the sermon was regarded as in itself sufficient for the whole service, and all other parts of public worship were looked upon either as preliminaries or subordinate exercises, not calling for any particular preparation or attention. It was a time when spiritual life was low, and the outward expression of that life exhibited a corresponding want of vigor. The evil, therefore, from which the Church suffered at this period was not an excess of attention to worship, but a neglect of it; not a too great elaboration of forms, but an almost total disregard of them, even of such as are helpful to the development of the spiritual life of the worshipper. And thus it came to pass that the struggle of more than a century against the use of prescribed forms of worship resulted in a condition more extreme than had been either anticipated or desired, for not only were such forms abandoned, but worship itself was neglected and disregarded.

In reviewing the period subsequent to the rejection of Laud's Liturgy and up to the time

of the First Secession within the Church of Scotland, some features that mark the general trend of the spirit of Presbyterianism with regard to worship are clearly manifest.

First, in the rapid growth of the sect of the Brownists and their sympathizers, a growth that had been rendered the easier by the arbitrary acts of Charles and Laud in a preceding period, we find a clear indication of the spread of opinions strongly opposed to the use of prescribed forms of prayer and, indeed, of any ritual in the exercises of public worship. It may be urged, as has already been remarked, that this opposition was not the result of an unprejudiced consideration of the subject on its merits, but that it was rather an outcome of the spirit which had been aroused by the persecutions through which the Stuart had endeavored to force a ritual upon the Church of Scotland. This may be granted, and yet it is not to be forgotten that many of those who held these views were among the excellent of their age, men who did not hesitate to bear persecution and to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ for conscience' sake, and who, while doubtless influenced by the sentiments of those who stood to them either in

the relation of friends or foes, were not men to allow prejudice to blind both reason and conscience alike. They had found a ritualistic worship associated with practices which they could not but judge to be ungodly and unjust, and engaged in by men who made much of form, but little of truth and charity and justice. It is not surprising, therefore, that in their desire for a revived spiritual life in the Church they should consider such a life to be most effectively forwarded by a departure from those forms that had been associated with the decay of true religion in their midst.

But, in the second place, this sentiment in favor of absolute freedom from form was not confined to sectaries or their sympathizers in the Church, it made itself manifest among the leaders of religion in the land and in the Church courts. The proposal of the General Assembly of 1643 to prepare a Directory of Worship, and the subsequent action of the Scottish Church in uniting with the Westminster Divines in the preparation of that Directory, clearly indicate that the Church had changed its attitude since the day in which the Assembly refused to alter any of the prayers in the Book of Common

Order. The adoption of the Directory by the Scottish Church was in a measure an endorsement of the views of those who were opposed to the use of prescribed forms, and while it is true that the Scotch Commissioners would have preferred the retention of parts of the Book of Common Order, it is surely instructive that even these men were prepared to abandon all forms for worship and to accept simply a regulative Directory. The enthusiastic endorsement accorded the Directory, both by Parliament and by the Assembly, is a further indication that the spirit of the Church of Scotland had undergone whatever slight change was necessary to make it favorable to a simple regulation of public worship, unhampered by anything that had even the appearance of a ritual.

The introduction of the Directory into Scotland, it is true, effected a very slight change in the method of conducting public worship. Indeed, a comparison of the order of service as laid down in the Directory with that prescribed by the Book of Common Order shows the order of worship to be the same in both. And thus it was that Baillie, in addressing the Assembly, and expressing his satisfaction at what had been

accomplished, declared it to be a most remarkable distinction "that the practice of the Church of Scotland set down in a most wholesome, pious and prudent Directory, should come in the place of a Liturgy in all the three Dominions." By the adoption of the Directory all the substance of the worship of the Church of Scotland was retained with the order likewise of its different parts, but the suggested forms were surrendered, and even prayers, which owing to the circumstances of an earlier age had been retained and submitted for discretionary use, were laid aside. No mention was made in the Directory of the use of the Gloria, nor did the creed find a place either in public worship or in the administration of the Sacraments, but the Lord's Prayer was mentioned as being "not only a pattern of prayer, but itself a comprehensive prayer," and a recommendation was accordingly made that it should be "used in the prayers of the Church."

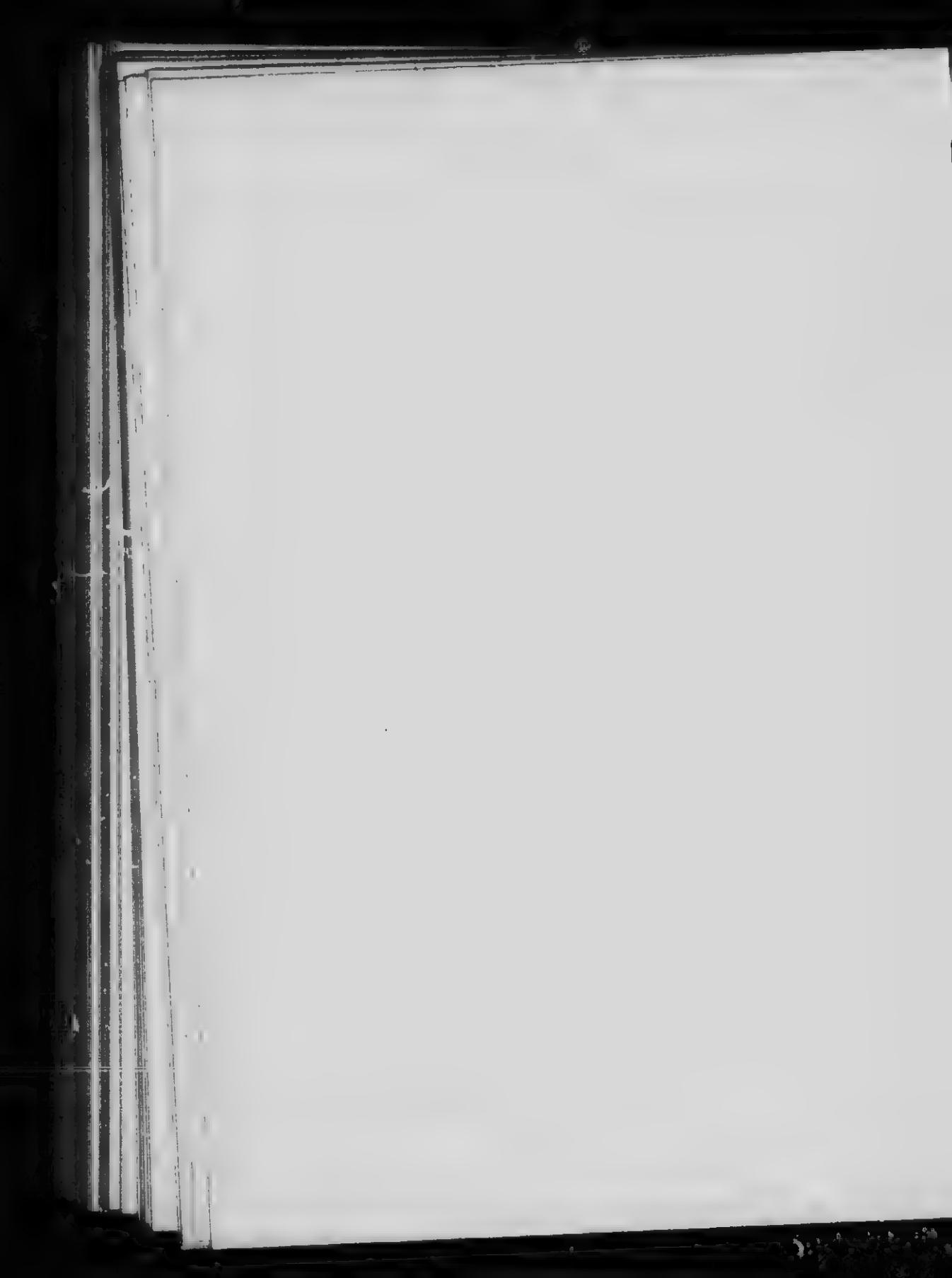
It is evident, therefore, that the spirit of the Presbyterian Church was still strongly in favor of worship regulated in its order and providing for all the different spiritual exercises authorized by Scripture, but which at the same time should be free from any imposed forms from which

worshippers should not be allowed to deviate. Of the opinion of the Church of Scotland at this time on the dire effects produced by the use of a ritual in the cultivation of formality among the people, and in the encouragement of a lifeless ministry in the Church, there can be no question, as the adoption of the terms of the preface to the Directory clearly shows. With the experience of the English Church of that age before them as an object lesson of the evil effects of ritualistic worship, the Presbyterian Church was not unwilling to abandon the use of all imposed forms, and to give itself rather to the cultivation and development of a truly spiritual worship.

And finally, the spirit thus planted and fostered in Scotland, was intensified during the persecutions which followed the restoration of Charles the Second. So firmly was this opposition to an imposed form of worship implanted in the hearts of Presbyterians that, alike at the Revolution and again at the time when the terms from the "Act of Union" between England and Scotland were under consideration the most earnest representations were made, to the end that there should be no change in the worship

of the Scottish Church, but that the freedom in this matter, so prized and so dearly won, should be secured to the people of Scotland.

The Church of Scotland then, it may safely be said, moved ever in the direction of securing greater liberty in worship, rather than towards an increase of ritual and an imposition of form. Every succeeding period in her history, whether we judge from the general spirit characterizing the people or from the official acts of the Parliament and the Church, shows a growing distaste for a liturgical worship and an increasing appreciation of liberty in all matters pertaining to the approach of the soul to God. The Church of Scotland rejected, on the one hand, the extreme positions of sectaries who condemned alike a combined system of Church government, the celebration of marriage in the Church, the use in worship of the Lord's Prayer and all regulations even of the order of Divine worship, and on the other hand it resisted successfully the strongest Anglican influences which would have deprived it of the liberty it prized and would have circumscribed that liberty by a ritual. It retained dignity and order, while it rejected both the license of extravagance and the bondage of form.



**Presbyterian Worship Outside of the  
Established Church of Scotland.**

WHETHER they were right or wrong . . . no man of fairness will fail to allow that the record of the Seceders all through the period of decadence was a noble one, a record of splendid service to the cause of Christ and the historic Church of Scotland.—M'CRIE.

## **Chapter VIII.**

### **Presbyterian Worship Outside of the Established Church of Scotland.**

No review of Presbyterian Worship would be complete which failed to consider the spirit which has characterized those large sections of the Church which exist in Scotland outside of the Establishment, and those also which have been planted and fostered in the New World.

In 1733 the first Secession Church was formed, when Ebenezer Erskine, William Wilson, Alexander Moncrieff, and James Fisher, protesting against what they regarded as the unjust treatment accorded them by the prevailing party in the Church, were declared to be no longer members of the Church of Scotland. This Secession Church enjoyed a rapid growth, and soon came to form a very influential section in the Presbyterianism of the land. Its principles and practices with regard to worship show that some suspicion of a ritual and

partiality for a free form of worship which has always characterized the Presbyterian Church in the days of her greatest vigor. In 1736 this Church published its judicial testimony, in which it declared its loyalty to the Directory of Worship as the same was approved by the Assembly of 1645. Some years later one section of this Church, known as the Anti-burgher, published a condemnation of the corruptions of worship as witnessed in England and Wales, and at a subsequent period a further manifesto, in which the reading by ministers of their sermons in the public ministry of the Word was condemned, as was also "the conduct of those adult persons who, in ordinary circumstances, either in public, in private, or in secret, restrict themselves to set forms of prayer, whether these be read or repeated." The same manifesto, in a part treating of Psalmody, claimed for the Psalms Divine authority, as suitable for the service of praise, in the Christian as well as in the Old Testament dispensation, but acknowledged that, in addition to these, "others contained in the New Testament itself may be sung in the ordinance of Praise."

Similar to this position was that of the

United Associate Synod, which, formed in 1820, published, seven years later, its views on the subject of worship. It condemned "the conduct of adult persons who restricted themselves to set forms of prayer, whether read or whether repeated;" it acknowledged also that other parts of Scripture besides the Psalms were suitable for praise, and, with regard to the use of the Lord's Prayer in public worship, a matter which had caused much discussion within the Church in earlier times, it asserted that:

"As Scripture Doxologies and the Divinely-approved petition of saints may be warrantably adopted in our devotional exercises, both public and personal, so may the Lord's Prayer be used by itself or in connection with other supplications."

Other manifestos were published from time to time by different bodies as separations or unions took place, for the early part of the past century was a period of frequent divisions and of more happy unions. But while differences existed with regard to the use of paraphrases and human hymns in the service of praise, on the general subject of simplicity of worship and absence of prescribed forms, the manifestos previous to the middle of the century were a

unit. As late indeed as 1872, in a deliverance of the United Presbyterian Church upon the subject of instrumental music in public worship, this jealousy of simplicity in worship hitherto enjoyed is evident. To a consideration of that subject this Church had been led by the example of the Established Church in securing to its congregations liberty of action in the matter. The United Presbyterian Synod, in a deliverance in which it declined to pronounce judgment upon the introduction of instrumental music in Divine service, proceeded to urge upon the courts of the Church, and upon individual ministers, the duty of guarding anxiously the simplicity of worship in the sanctuary. Not until recent years has any considerable section of the Presbyterian Church shown a tendency to return to the bondage of a ritual.

The views of the bodies above referred to will be differently estimated by different men. Some will be inclined to regard the Secessionists as narrow in spirit and severe in their simplicity, and as often failing to exhibit a due regard for the beauty of holiness that should characterize Divine worship. It will surely, however, indicate on the part of those who read their history

a want of appreciation if they fail to recognize the sturdy spiritual life which, forming, as it ever does, the truest foundation for right views of religion, marked these men of whom an eminent leader in the religious life of Scotland has said "they stood for Truth and Light in days when the battle went sore against them both; and as long as Truth and Light are maintained in Scotland it will not be forgotten that a great share of the honor of having carried them safe through some of our darkest days, was given by God to the Seceders."

The period of the disruption in Scotland was one of such struggle concerning great and fundamental principles of Church government, that the Free Church, during the first quarter of a century of its existence as a separate communion, had little time to devote to a consideration of the subject of worship; with the work of organization at home, and afterwards in seeking to carry forward evangelization abroad it was fully occupied. It was for the Free Church, as also for the Established Church, a period of revival and of new life, and at such a time men think but little of form and method, finding spiritual satisfaction in the voluntary and spon-

taneous worship which such an occasion develops. The practice, however, of the Free Church in worship, and its uniform tendency, was decidedly un-liturgical; freedom from prescribed forms in prayer and an absence of ritual marked its services during the half-century of its existence as a separate communion. So emphatic was its devotion to absolute liberty on the part of the worshippers that it was the last of the great Presbyterian bodies in Scotland to take any steps towards a further control of public worship other than that which is provided in the Directory.

About the year 1885 the Presbyterian Churches of England and of Australia appointed committees to consider the matter of a uniform order and method of public worship, and these in each case devoted their efforts to the revision of the Westminster Directory, and in neither has anything more liturgical been suggested than the repetition of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer by the people. The orders of service recommended are more lengthy than that of the Westminster Directory, but are similar in their general character. The hesitation shown in accepting even such slight changes as were sug-

geated and the vigorous debates which resulted, furnish abundant evidence that the spirit of both of these Churches is still strong in favor of voluntary and untrammeled worship.

It is but right that in reviewing public worship outside of the Established Church, reference should be made to the practice of those large sections of the Presbyterian Church which, originating in Scotland, have grown strong in other lands.

The Presbyterian Church of the United States of America has exhibited in the main the same spirit that has characterized Presbyterian bodies across the sea. In 1788 the Synod of New York and Philadelphia adopted among other symbols the Westminster Directory for the Worship of God, abbreviating it somewhat, but changing its instructions in no material respect. There has been but little legislation by this Church concerning this subject. In 1874 the General Assembly declared the practice of a responsive service in the public worship of the sanctuary to be without warrant in the New Testament, and to be unwise and impolitic in view of its inevitable tendency to destroy uniformity in the form already accepted. It further urged upon

sessions of Churches to preserve in act and spirit the simplicity indicated in the Directory. This judgment of the American Church with regard to the influence of a liturgy in public worship is not materially different from that of the framers of the Directory as it is set forth in their strongly-worded preface. In 1876 the Assembly declined to send down to presbyteries an overture declaring that responsive readings are a permissible part of worship in the sanctuary, although it declined at the same time to recommend sessions to make the question a subject of Church discipline. Six years afterwards it again refused to "prepare and publish a Book of Forms for public and social worship and for special occasions which shall be the authorized service-book of the Church to be used whenever a prescribed formula may be desired;" the reason given for such refusal, however, was the inexpediency of such a step in view of "the liberty that belongs to each minister to avail himself of the Calvinistic or other ancient devotional forms of the Reformed Churches, so far as may seem to him for edification." This explanation clearly indicates that, while the American Church is in sympathy with the necessity

on the part of ministers, of a due and orderly discharge of all public services, yet it is unwilling to lay itself open to the charge of even suggesting the imposition of forms upon the Church for use on stated occasions. An optional liturgy has not been without its advocates among the leaders in this influential section of the Church. Such eminent and wise men as Drs. Charles and A. A. Hodge and Dr. Ashbel Green confessed themselves as in favor of the introduction of such forms for optional use, and Dr. Baird in his "Eutaxia" and other writers have argued vigorously from the example of sister churches of the continent of Europe for a return to the practice which they regarded as historically Presbyterian. As yet, however, the Church has preferred liberty to even suggested restriction.

The results in this Church, it cannot be denied, are not all that could be desired. The Directory is but little studied by ministers, and has by many been practically set aside. Frequently each congregation in the matter of worship is a law unto itself. Responsive readings have been introduced in some places, and choir responses after prayer in others; in some congregations the people join in the repetition of the

Creed and the Lord's Prayer, while in others neither of these is heard; in one the collection has become a formal offertory; in another it affords an opportunity for the rendition of a musical selection by the choir. Worship in this great Church is at the present time characterized by the absence of a desirable uniformity, which it was one evident purpose of the Directory to secure, and in some of its congregations by the use of symbolism that occasionally becomes extravagant, and which is calculated to appeal entirely to the imagination, the result frequently being a service not attaining to that dignity which an authorized liturgy fosters, while it sacrifices that simplicity in which Presbyterians have been accustomed to glory.

The United Presbyterian Church in America, the result of so many happy unions, has always regarded simplicity in worship as an end earnestly to be desired, and worthy of all serious effort to secure. Its influence has, therefore, been uniformly in favor of that avoidance of forms against which the Seceders of Scotland, whom it represents on this continent, so often protested.

The Presbyterian Church, South—that Church whose history has been characterized by a loyalty

so unswerving to the doctrinal standards of Presbyterianism, by a spirit so wisely aggressive in evangelistic and missionary effort, and by a ministry so scholarly and eloquent, has, in the matter of public worship, shown as constant a fidelity to the Westminster Directory as in doctrine it has shown to the Confession of Faith. There have been attempts made to introduce changes looking towards the adoption of optional liturgical forms, bu' these have been few, and they have been rejected in such a way as to leave no room for doubt as to the mind of the Church in this matter.

The Directory has been ably revised, but it still remains a Directory, suggestive and eminently suitable to present requirements of the Church. Serious and persevering attention has been given to the praise service, and no less than three Hymnals have received and now enjoy the Church's *imprimatur*. Public worship in Divine service has retained a much greater uniformity among the Presbyterians of the Southern States than among their brethren in the North, and there has been less yielding to the popular demand for those features in worship that appeal

to the imagination, and which so often serve to entertain rather than to edify.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada, owing to the ties that bind it to the Churches of the Old Land, has closely followed their practice, and its method in worship has been characterized by a similar spirit. No authoritative or mandatory formulas have been imposed upon it, nor does it seem likely that such would be received should they be proposed. Reverence and dignity have in general characterized its public services, and yet in recent years those changes which have gradually been introduced into the worship of the Church in that part of the American Republic lying contiguous to the Dominion have made their appearance in Presbyterian worship in Canada. The chief result has been, as in that Church also, an unfortunate want of uniformity in this part of divine service. There has always been a constant and due regard paid to all parts of worship provided for in the Directory, and the neglect of any of these parts cannot be seriously charged against any considerable part of the Church, but congregations have frequently considered themselves at liberty to change their order and to

vary them as circumstances seem to demand. It is this feature as much as any that has in recent years led to an agitation for the improvement of public worship, and that is calling the earnest attention of the Church to a matter of supreme importance.

Until very recently then, all branches of the Presbyterian Church in the British Empire and those bodies in the United States whose standards have been those of Westminster, have refused to recognize the need for any other formula of worship than that, or such as that, provided in the Directory. And where any considerable desire for change and improvement has been found, it has expressed itself usually as favorable to a revised Directory rather than as desirous of the adoption by the Church of a liturgy, however simple.

Those great sections of the Church which have been most active in the work of Home and Foreign Evangelization, a work that has especially claimed attention during this century, have found the simp'c w<sup>r</sup>ship of our fathers well suited to the cultivation of the spiritual life that must of necessity lie behind all such efforts, and to the development of the reverent and devo-

tional spirit so characteristic of an aggressive Christianity. The Church has been true to the traditions and principles so loyally maintained in the days of her heroic struggles in the past, and along these lines she has found in her public worship blessing and inspiration for her peaceful toils, even as our fathers in their day found in similar worship strength and revived courage with which to meet their difficulties and to endure persecution.

**Modern Movements in Presbyterian  
Churches Respecting Public  
Worship.**

"ALL who desire to manifest an intelligent appreciation of what is distinctive in Presbyterian ritual would do well to guard against attaching undue importance, or adhering too tenaciously, to details of a past or present usage, as if these constituted the essentials from which there must never be the smallest deviation, of which there may never be the slightest modification or adaptation to altered acquirements and circumstances."—MCCRIE.

## **Chapter IX.**

### **Modern Movements in Presbyterian Churches Respecting Public Worship.**

THE earliest indication of any general desire in Scotland for a more elaborate service than that in general use in the Church at the time of the Revolution was seen in the proposal to enlarge the Psalmody and to improve the Service of Praise. As early as 1713 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland called the attention of congregations to the necessity that existed for a more decent performance of the public praise of God, in a recommendation that was exceedingly desirable and necessary if the accounts of the service of praise at that time are to be believed. This was followed, not long afterward, by the introduction of paraphrases, styled "Songs of Scripture," and later of hymns, and finally of instrumental music. In this matter of the improvement of worship in the department of praise, the Secession Churches in several cases

were more forward than the Established Church, the revived interest in religion and worship which had been, in a measure the cause of their existence lending itself to such measures. In all sections of the Church the conflict concerning praise in worship was for a long period prosecuted with an energy that frequently arose to bitterness. The vexed questions of hymn-singing and the use of instruments in Churches being settled, there followed, or perhaps it may be said there arose out of these, the further question of the elaboration and improvement of other parts of worship.

In 1858 the Assembly of the Church of Scotland recommended to congregations that were without a minister, the use in worship of a book prepared by its authority, in which were embodied the prayers of the Book of Common Order, together with much material from the Directory of Worship. This action on the part of the Church was regarded by some as indicating the existence of a spirit which warranted the formation of "The Church Service Society." This Society was formed by certain ministers of the Established Church who were strongly impressed with the desirability of the adoption

by the Church of certain authorized forms of prayer for public worship, and of the use of prescribed forms in the administration of the Sacraments. By the publication of its constitution, in which it announced its object as "The Study of the Liturgies ancient and modern of the Christian Church, with a view to the preparation and ultimate publication of certain forms of prayer for public worship, and services for the administration of the Sacraments, the celebration of Marriage, the Burial of the Dead," etc., it very early aroused vigorous opposition on the part of many who saw in its organization an evident intention to introduce into the Church a liturgical service. Such a purpose the Society emphatically disavowed, and insisted that there was no desire on the part of its members to encroach upon the simplicity of Presbyterian worship, but claimed rather the desire to redeem the same from lifelessness and lack of a devotional spirit with which they declared it is so likely to be characterized. So effectively have the fears of those who first uttered their objections been allayed, that the Society is said to comprise in its membership, at the present time, more than one-third of the ordained ministers of the Established Church.

The results of this Society's labors have been published in a volume which is now in its seventh edition. It is a book of more than 400 pages, and is entitled, "Euchologion—A Book of Common Order." Its contents seem to harmonize more with the views which were charged against the originators of the Society at its commencement than with the defence which was put forward in its behalf at that time. Although widely used it has no official sanction of the Church, and, therefore, it is not necessary to enter into any close analysis of its contents. Briefly, however, it may be said, it is a liturgy much more closely approximating to the English Book of Common Prayer than to Knox's Book of Common Order, or to the ritual of any of the Reformed Churches of the Continent, with which its projectors declare themselves to be more in sympathy than with the Episcopal Communion of England.

The first part comprises, in addition to prescribed daily Scripture readings and readings for every Sunday of the year, the Order of Divine Service for morning and evening for the five several Sundays of the month; in this Order are contained special forms of prayer, responses to be used by the congregation, the Lord's Prayer, to

be repeated by minister and congregation together, and the Apostles' Creed, which is to be either said or sung.

In the second part, which contains "additional materials for daily and other services," the first place is given to the Litany, which is an exact transcript of that of the Church of England with the exception of a change in one petition, rendered necessary by the difference in the forms of government in the two Churches. A number of "prayers for special graces," "collects" and "prayers for special seasons" and "additional forms of service" are added. The "prayers for special seasons" have regard to "our Lord's advent," "the Incarnation," "Palm Sunday," "the descent of the Holy Ghost," etc.

The last section of the book provides forms of service for the administration of the Sacraments, visitation of the sick, marriage, burial, ordination, etc. In the form for the visitation of the sick a responsive service is provided, as also in the order for Holy Communion. On the whole it is probably not too much to assert that "Euchologion—a Book of Common Order," issued by the Church Service Society, is decidedly more liturgical in form than was the unfortunate

Laud's Liturgy, which raised against itself and its projectors such a vigorous protest on the part of the Church of Scotland.

Following the organization of the Society referred to, came one in connection with the United Presbyterian Church called "The United Presbyterian Devotional Association," having for its object "to promote the edifying conduct of the devotional services of the Church." This Society declares its willingness to profit from the worship of other Churches besides the Presbyterian, but at the same time asserts its loyalty to the principles and history of Presbyterianism. The forms published in its book, "Presbyterian Forms of Service," are not intended to be used liturgically, but the purpose is that they should furnish examples and serve as illustrations of the reverent and seemly conduct of public worship.

The latest book to be issued on these lines is "A New Directory for the Public Worship of God"; this name is further enlarged by the following description, which provides a sufficient index to its contents: "Founded on the Book of Common Order (1560-64) and the Westminster Directory (1643-45) and prepared by the Public

Worship Association in Connection with the Free Church of Scotland."

This book follows in general the form and method of the Directory, carefully avoiding the provision of even an optional liturgy. The form which it has assumed, that of a simple Directory of Worship, was adopted after long discussion in the "Association" on these four questions, "The desirableness of an optional liturgy as distinguished from a Directory of Public Worship;" "The Desirableness of a Responsive Service," such a service to include the use by the people with the minister of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Beatitudes, the Commandments, etc.; "The desirableness of the Collect form of prayer and of Responses in general," and "The desirableness of the celebration of the Christian year."

After long and exhaustive debate on the above questions the book has been issued in its present form as a simple Directory of Worship, responses and the celebration of the Christian year and even an optional liturgy having been rejected as undesirable. Orders of service are suggested, as well for public worship as for the administration of the Sacraments and for special services, and suggestions at great length are

offered concerning what should find a place in the prayers of Invocation, Thanksgiving, Confession, Petition, Intercession and Illumination. A few historic prayers of eminent saints of God are included as examples, and large quotations are made for the same purpose from Knox's Book of Common Order and from Hermann's "Consultation," and from this last source "A Litany for Special Days of Prayer" is added in an Appendix. If the Euchologion indicates a strong tendency on the part of the "Church Service Society" towards the introduction of a responsive and liturgical service into public worship, the New Directory of Public Worship indicates just as strongly a tendency within the "Public Worship Association" to avoid the introduction of even optional forms and to retain the simplicity that has for three centuries characterized Presbyterian worship.

The attempts to revise the Directory of Worship in order to modify and adapt it to present-day requirements made recently by the Presbyterian Church of England, and by the Federated Churches of Australia and Tasmania, have already been referred to. That these Churches have confined their efforts to a revision of the

Directory, and have in this asserted their approval of a Directory of Worship rather than of a liturgy, is in itself an instructive fact.

In the revised Directory of the Presbyterian Church of England some changes are made in the direction of securing for the people a larger part in audible worship. The repetition of the Creed is permitted, and where used is to be repeated by the minister and people together; it is recommended as seemly that the people after every prayer should audibly say *Amen*, and the Lord's Prayer, which should be uniformly used, is to be said by all.

The work of revision by the Churches of Australia and Tasmania introduces fewer changes. In the administration of "The Lord's Supper" it is recommended that at the close of the Consecration Prayer the minister recite the "Apostles Creed" as a brief summary of Christian Faith, and when the Lord's Prayer is used, as advised before or after the prayer of intercession, the people may be invited to join audibly or to add *Amen*.

Worthy of more extended notice than the limits of this chapter will permit is "The Book of Church Order" of the Presbyterian Church

in the United States. As early as 1864 a proposal was made in Assembly to revise the Westminster Directory of Worship for the purpose not only of rendering it more suitable to the requirements of the time, but in order also to so modify and improve it as to increase its suggestiveness and helpfulness to ministers. The work was undertaken by a committee appointed in 1879, and in 1894 this committee presented its formal report, which was adopted, and the revised Directory was ordered to be published. It contains sixteen chapters, treating of all the matters treated in the original Directory, and containing in addition suggestive chapters on "Sabbath Schools," "Prayer Meetings," "Secret and Family Worship," and "The Admission of Persons to Sealing Ordinances."

Respecting the public reading of Holy Scripture the revised Directory declares it to be "a part of the public worship of God," and that "it ought to be performed by the minister or some other authorized person." Of public prayer, after indicating its different parts, and suggesting the place that it should occupy in the service, the mind of the Church is thus expressed: "But we think it necessary to observe that, although

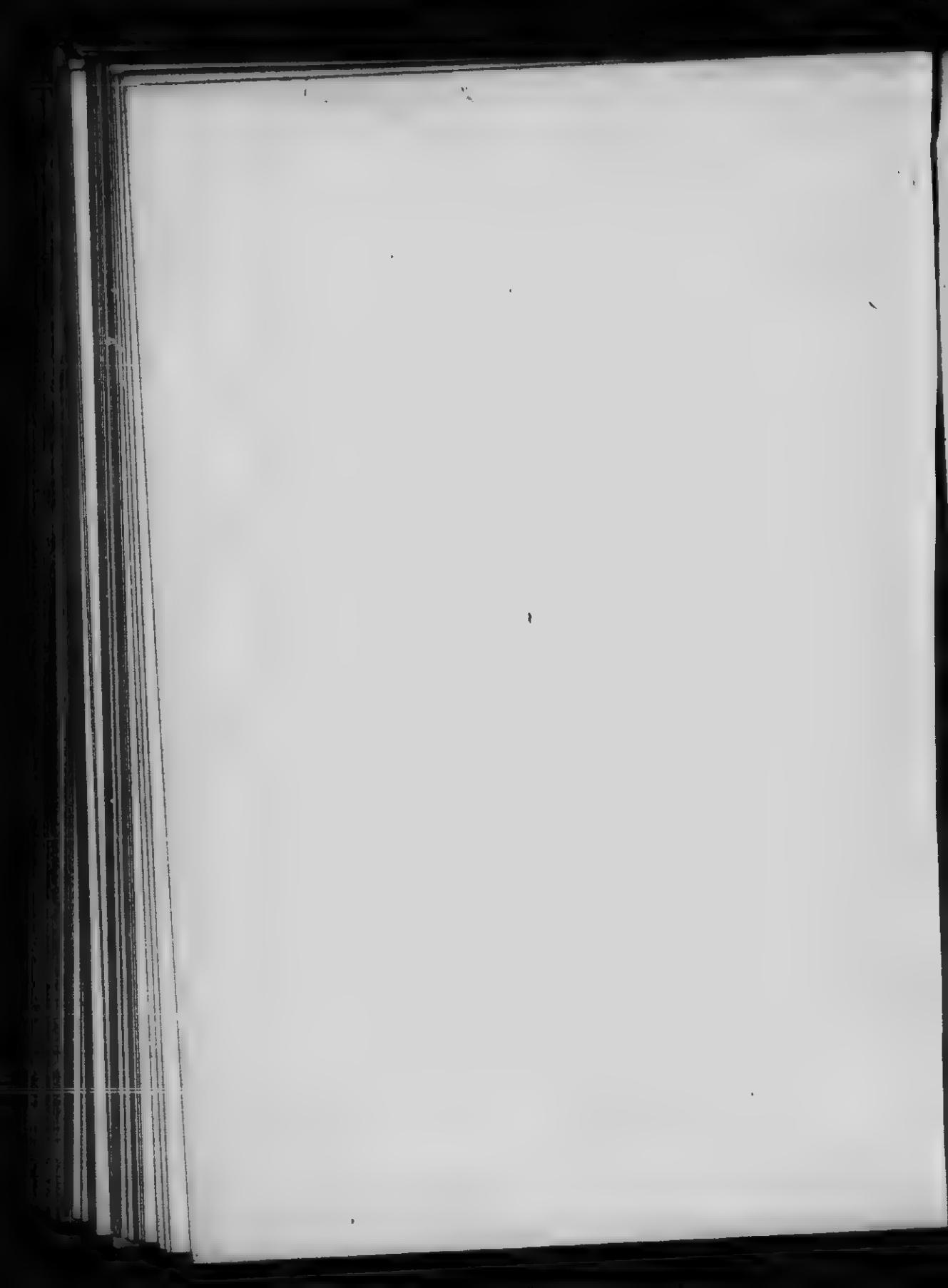
we do not approve, as is well known, of confining ministers to set or fixed forms of prayer for public worship, yet it is the indispensable duty of every minister, previously to his entering on his office, to prepare and qualify himself for this part of his duty, as well as for preaching." In the chapters on the administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper particular directions are given, and questions suitable to be asked of the parents of children presented for baptism are suggested, while in the directions for the admission of persons to sealing ordinances, an important distinction is drawn between the reception of baptized children of the Church and that of those who, on confession of their faith, are at that time first received. To the Directory there are added optional forms for use at a marriage service and at a funeral service. The book is not elaborate, and may be thought by many to be far from comprehensive as a Directory, but it is suggestive and helpful, and, while true to the principles of Presbyterian worship, it gives no evidence of disregard for the beauty and appropriateness that should characterize the public services of the Church. Among books of Church order it is well worth study by those

who desire in worship to combine simplicity with dignity.

It is evident from these recent and simultaneous movements in so many branches of the Presbyterian Church, that there exists a feeling on the part of many that there is need of improvement in the important department of worship in our public services. It is probable that there will be found few to deny this, or to confess absolute satisfaction with the worship of the Church to-day. The question on which many will hold widely divergent opinions is as to the means to be adopted for its improvement. Some there are, as in the Church Service Society, who advocate a prescribed liturgy for at least certain parts of public worship; others, who desire a liturgy, but who are content to leave to congregations or to ministers freedom to use it or to disregard it; still others are loyal to the spirit of the age which produced the Westminster Directory, while they are at the same time willing to revise that work, which was found so serviceable to the Church for so long a period, and so to render it more suitable to the demands of our own age.

If a judgment may be formed from the move-

ments that have just been reviewed, it is probable that at least for some time to come, the Presbyterian Church will continue to walk in the paths that have become familiar through long usage. The age, it is true, is past when dictation on this matter, either favoring or condemning a liturgy, would be suffered; and, therefore, it is to be expected that congregations will exercise liberty in the matter. Yet, so far as the general sentiment of the Church is concerned, a sentiment that will doubtless from time to time find expression in official declarations, it appears evident that the preponderating feeling is still strongly in favor of a voluntary worship, unrestricted even by suggested forms.



## **Conclusion.**

"A constant form is a certain way to bring  
the soul to a cold, insensible, formal worship."—  
BAXTER.

## **Chapter X.**

### **Conclusion.**

THE foregoing brief review of public worship within those influential sections of the Presbyterian Church whose attitude on this question has been examined, affords a sufficient ground for the assertion that those bodies have shown, until recently, a uniform and steadily growing suspicion of a liturgical service, even in its most modified form.

The Book of Common Order, the first official service book adopted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for the regulation of its worship, marked a distinct advance towards a freer form and greater liberty on the part of the minister in conducting Divine service. As compared not only with the English Prayer Book of the time, which was used in Reformed parishes in Scotland, but even with Calvin's order of worship, which had been so generally adopted by the Reformed Churches on the Con-

tinent, this Book of Common Order was characterized by a spirit of larger liberty in worship and less reliance upon forms either suggested or imposed.

In the period of struggle through which the Church of Scotland passed in the reigns of James the First and Charles the First, the conflicts, civil and religious, only served, so far as they had any effect upon the views of the Church concerning worship, to strengthen the already strong opposition to prescribed forms of prayer and to ritualistic observances. Accordingly, when it was proposed to substitute for the Book of Common Order a Directory, in which there should appear no prescribed forms for any part of public worship, the Scotch Assembly gave a ready assent to the proposal, and, although some words of regret at parting with an historic symbol were spoken at that time by leaders in the Scottish Church, they were only such as it was natural to expect should be spoken in view of the strong attachment for that symbol fostered by its use during many years, but they were not such as indicate that those who so spoke felt themselves called upon to surrender any

principle in laying aside the order to which they had been so long accustomed. Indeed the hearty and cheerful adoption by the Scottish Assembly of the strongly worded preface to the Westminster Directory, exposing as it does so vigorously the weakness as well as the dangers resulting from the use of a liturgy in public worship plainly indicates that in the judgment of the Church of that day the use of liturgical forms was not only not helpful, but was positively pernicious, as well to the best interests of the congregation as to the most efficient service of the minister.

Again in a third epoch of the Church's history, in the days following the "killing time," and marked by the succession to the throne of William of Orange, and later by the union of England and Scotland, the Presbyterian Church of the latter country not only reasserted her loyalty to the principles of liberty in worship which she had so long defended, but she also succeeded in having secured to her by legislation, freedom from the imposition of ritualistic forms.

It is at least allowable to assert that the leaders in the Scottish Church in the days of the Westminster Assembly and at the beginning

of the eighteenth century, regarded the perfect liberty in worship allowed by the Directory not only as scriptural, but as suitable for the attainment of the great ends of public worship, for on no other grounds would they have consented to its adoption in Scotland. And if Presbyterians of to-day desire to imitate the spirit and methods of their ancestors, it is reasonable that they should study the example of the men of the second Reformation. There is good ground for claiming that in no period of the Church's history did it give evidence of a deeper spiritual life and a more aggressive energy than in the age in which those heroic spirits lived. The leaders in that day also, such men as Henderson, Gillespie, Rutherford and Baillie, understood the spirit of Presbyterianism and the need of the Church quite as fully as did any leaders of either an earlier or a later day. It is not to be forgotten that, in an age that produced men whose names must never be omitted when the roll of Scotland's greatest sons is called, the Presbyterian Church stood firmly for absolute liberty in worship from prescribed forms.

It should, therefore, be considered by those who would have the Church return to the

bondage of forms or even to their optional use, that they are advocating not a return to the practice of any former period in which the Church was free to exercise its own desire in this matter, but rather that they are urging her to a course that will be wholly antagonistic to the spirit of Presbyterianism as indicated by the trend of its practice during a stirring and eventful history of three hundred years. The spirit of Presbyterian worship has been consistently and persistently non-liturgical and anti-ritualistic, and to advocate the adoption of liturgy and ritual to-day is to depart completely from that historic attitude.

A few words on the subject of liturgies in general may not inappropriately close this sketch of the history of Presbyterian worship since the Reformation.

It is now generally acknowledged that the introduction of liturgies into the worship of the Christian Church was not earlier than the latter part of the fourth century. Not until the presbyter had become a priest, and worship had degenerated into a function, did liturgies find a place in Christian service. Even the earliest Oriental liturgies were sacramentaries, the Chris-

tian sacrifice being the central object around which the entire service gathered. So long as the life of the Church was strong, and in its strength found delight in a freedom of approach to God, so long the Apostolic practice was followed and worship was unrestricted and simple.

During the middle ages, as religion became ever more formal and less spiritual, as the priesthood deteriorated intellectually and spiritually, liturgies flourished; and it is not too much to assert that just in proportion to the growth of the liturgical service in any Church, in that proportion the power of its ministry has declined. Indeed the whole history of liturgies in their origin, development, and effects, should make the Church that rejoices in freedom from their binding forms most careful ere submitting in any degree to their paralyzing influence.

It is argued in favor of the introduction of forms of prayer that their use would tend to the more orderly and dignified conducting of public worship by the minister. It is not a difficult matter to take exception to methods to which we have long been accustomed, and to compare these, sometimes to their disadvantage, with ideal conditions. As a matter of fact, however,

it may in all fairness be asked, does disorder or irreverence characterize Presbyterian worship in general, or indeed to any noticeable extent? Whatever lovers of another system, within our own Church, may say, it cannot be denied that the impression in the minds of men of all denominations (an impression that has not gained strength without cause) is that, compared with the worship of any other denomination, that of the Presbyterian Church is characterized by reverence, dignity and order. The conduct of any average congregation in the Presbyterian Church, and the heartiness with which its members join in every part of public worship will appear at no disadvantage when compared with that of a congregation worshipping with a ritual. Whatever other blessings a liturgy may secure for those devoted to its use, it has never been able to develop in the Churches where it is employed a spirit and conduct in public worship as reverent and devotional, and at the same time so marked by understanding, as that which has uniformly characterized the Presbyterian Church, and that Church would have to gain very much in other directions to compensate for the opening of the door to the formal and careless repeti-

tion of holy words so often associated with the use of a liturgy.

It is further argued that congregations would, with the aid of a liturgy, be enabled to take both a more lively and a more intelligent part in public prayer than they can possibly do when endeavoring to follow a minister who uses extempore prayer only. This argument must appear to be of considerable weight to those only who forget how lifeless and unmeaning a mere form of words, with which the lips have grown familiar, can become. Paley frankly admitted, when treating of this matter, that "the perpetual repetition of the same form of words produces weariness and inattentiveness in the congregation." There is a danger that by carelessness in considering the needs of the worshippers, and by diffusiveness, the minister may render the service of prayer far less helpful than it should be to those whom it is his privilege to lead to the throne of grace; but the cure for this is not to be found in the introduction of stereotyped forms, which in the nature of the case cannot be suitable for all occasions, but in a due recognition by the minister of the greatness of the duty which he assumes in speaking to God for

the people. Such a recognition will lead him to seek that preparation of heart and mind necessary for its helpful performance, nor will his consciousness of the need of help, other than man can give, go unrecognized by the Father of Spirits, Who in this matter also sends not His servants at their own charges.

As to the unity in prayer so much desired, true prayer is "in the Spirit," and earnest worshippers have a right to expect that their hearts will be united by that Spirit at the throne of grace, so that "with one accord" they may present their petitions and claim the promise to those who are thus agreed. This is the true unity and uniformity which Christians are bound to seek, and any mere mechanical uniformity of words, apart from this, is but the outward trappings of form which are much more liable to satisfy the careless worshipper than to inspire in him any thought of the need of a more real approach to God.

Lastly, it is urged that the responsive reading of the Scriptures would prove an aid to the intelligent understanding of them, and that the repetition of the Creed or other such formulary

of doctrine would serve to preserve the Church in the soundness of the faith.

The refutation of the first statement is to be found in many congregations where the practice has been tried, and in Sabbath Schools in which the custom now prevails. Many there are who will not read, others who cannot, and these fail entirely to profit from the unintelligible hum of a number of voices reading in what is often anything but harmony either of sound or time; and those who do read, frequently fail to receive that clear impression of the truth that should result from the effective and sympathetic reading of an entire passage. Without dwelling on the question whether the reading of the Scriptures is to be regarded as properly a ministerial act or not, on the simple ground of efficiency, responsive reading in large and constantly-changing congregations must frequently, if not generally, prove a failure.

As regards the repetition of the Creed by the congregation, it is certainly a question open for discussion whether or not the frequent repetition of a formulary of doctrine is a safeguard to the faith of the Church. In this matter also we are not without the light of experience and his-

tory; the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and America, which have never adopted any such practice, have certainly a record with respect to soundness in the faith which compares favorably with that of Churches which have for ages adopted this as a custom in their worship. It would not be difficult to mention Churches in which the repetition of a formulary of doctrine has long been an established question, and in which it is not apparent that the practice has successfully served as a safeguard to doctrine. Comparisons are odious, and we do not desire to institute them, but as wise men we should surely be guided by the light which history and experience in the past throws forward upon the pathway that we are to travel.

The Presbyterian Church has a history which may with reason cause all her children to thank God and take courage as they look forward on greater works than those of past days yet to be accomplished. Her past is rich in noble deeds, valiant testimonies and stirring struggles for the truth, and through it all she pressed forward rejoicing in a liberty which is inseparable from the principles of Presbyterianism, and one product of which has ever been an unwillingness

to be trammelled by forms in her approach to God. That history is such as need cause no Presbyterian to blush when it is related side by side with that of any other Church; surely they must be bold souls who would propose to introduce a radical change into the genius of Presbyterianism, or to relinquish principles which have led to such success, for others that have yet to show an equal vitality and vigor.

Our free and untrammelled worship demands from the worshipper his best; it brings him face to face with his God, and forbids him to rest in any mere repetition of a familiar form; it requires of the minister a preparation of both mind and soul, and challenges him to spiritual conflict which he dare not refuse, while in addition to all this its very freedom renders it adaptable to all the varying circumstances in which in a land like our own the worship of God must be conducted. It is suitable alike to the stately city church and to the humble cabin of the settler, or to the mission house of the far West; wherever men assemble for worship it affords the possibility for seemly, orderly and reverent procedure. Is there any other form of

worship suggested for which as much can be said?

As long as the ministers of the Presbyterian Church are men of God, recognizing His call to the sacred office of the ministry, and believing that those whom He calls He equips with needed grace and gifts for their work, so long will they be able to lead the congregations to which they minister in worship that shall be at once honoring to God and a help to the spiritual life of the people: when they cease to be such men forms may become, not only expedient, but essential.